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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY STUDIES IN ENGLISH

THE SOLILOQUIES OF SHAKESPEARE

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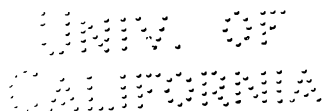
# THE SOLILOQUIES OF SHAKESPEARE

A STUDY IN TECHNIC

BY

MORRIS LEROY ARNOLD

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY, IN THE FACULTY  
OF PHILOSOPHY, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY



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*This Monograph has been approved by the Department of English in Columbia University as a contribution to knowledge worthy of publication.*

A. H. THORNDIKE,  
*Secretary.*



## PREFACE

To add another volume to the already overflowing library of Shakespearean criticism requires a word of apology. In defense of this study as a "contribution to knowledge," may I preface a brief plea—my conviction after four years' investigation of the subject?

In the first place, this, so far as I know, is the only collective study of all of Shakespeare's soliloquies. Again, with surprisingly few exceptions, this is the only technical examination of any of Shakespeare's soliloquies. Finally, although the soliloquy as a convention has been frequently treated of late years in some valuable magazine articles at home and some lengthy monographs abroad, this discussion really adds to our knowledge of the soliloquy. There is a new treatment, I believe, of the following topics: (1) definition of the soliloquy; (2) the data of Chapter II; (3) the expository soliloquy as a means of identification and disguising; (4) the soliloquy as an explanation of accompanying "business,"—such as sleep, suicide and death,—as an accompaniment of an entrance and of an exit, and as the "unconscious entrance"; (5) the classification and analysis of Shakespeare's comic soliloquies, showing their relation to conventional types; and (6) the collective study of Shakespeare's tragic soliloquies as revelations of thought and feeling, and, in particular, these aspects of the convention,—the apology for the introspective soliloquy, textual indications of introspection, the setting of the introspective soliloquy, and the "trance"; also, the evolution of the moralizing in Shakespeare's soliloquies, and the classification of the passions depicted by Shakespeare's soliloquizers. Notwithstanding the analytical method of this investigation, I trust that I have not entirely failed to "rise to the height of this great argument."

Whatever merit this dissertation may have is due in no small degree to the friendly criticism of the members of the English department of Columbia University. I am particularly grate-

ful to Professor A. H. Thorndike, to whom may be attributed in large measure the inception and development of the theme, to Professor W. W. Lawrence, to whose scholarly suggestions are due countless details which would otherwise have been omitted, to Professor W. P. Trent, whose kindly interest has been very helpful, and to Professor Brander Matthews, whose private library and whose broad knowledge of the subject have both been generously placed at my service. Moreover, I cannot refrain from mentioning my indebtedness to the many helpful suggestions of the Professors of Comparative Literature of Columbia University, and also to representatives of other departments of Columbia University, the University of Minnesota and Hamline University.

M. LER. A.

HAMLIN UNIVERSITY,  
March 23, 1911.

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## THE SOLILOQUIES OF SHAKESPEARE: A STUDY IN TECHNIC

### CHAPTER I

#### A GENERAL VIEW OF THE SOLILOQUY: ITS ORIGIN, NATURE, DEVELOPMENT AND DISAPPEARANCE

Until recently, nearly all the dramas of the world have contained soliloquies. Usually these speeches may be extracted from their environment and regarded as distinct literary achievements, expressing a philosophical truth, a psychological struggle, a humorous idea, or a short story tragic, romantic or comic; and, moreover, the same speeches generally serve as links in the chain of plot and characterization. Thus it is evident that the soliloquy is both a unit and a part of the whole, and in this dual aspect it lends itself to investigation.

Again, the historical significance of the soliloquy as a factor in the development of playmaking has been commensurate with its intrinsic literary merits. The soliloquy has grown up with the drama from its beginnings, and, indeed, a near relation, the monolog, seems to have been largely instrumental in giving birth to the drama.

Theories regarding the origins of literary species are to a certain extent conjectural; but it seems a plausible hypothesis<sup>1</sup> that, long before there was a formal drama in Greece, one of the youths among those who were dancing and singing hymns in honor of Dionysos, sprang upon a sacrificial table and harangued his fellows or indulged in ecstatic prayer. The harangue often occurs in the parabasis of the comedies of Aristophanes and occasionally in the monologs of Plautus and Terence. Except that these Roman monologists directly address the audience, their remarks do not differ essentially from the comic soliloquies in the same pieces. Thus is evidenced a

<sup>1</sup> A. E. Haigh, *The Attic Theater*, p. 6, note 4; p. 256.

certain parallelism between the soliloquy of classic comedy and the primitive monolog addressed to the audience.

Likewise, the prayer of the hypothetical predecessor of Thespis becomes the most prominent kind of soliloquy in classic tragedy. Indeed, as a whole, Greek tragedy appears monologic rather than dialogic, owing to the length of the speeches and the restricted number of actors. It seems fairly certain that Greek drama began with one actor, introduced, it is said, by Thespis in 535 B.C.<sup>2</sup> Then in the monolog appeared dialog, producing the form which is known as drama; and in the dialog there appeared monolog, similar to the early type, but, by virtue of its new position and function, rechristened soliloquy.

From this brief discussion of the possibly monologic origin of classic tragedy and comedy, it is evident that all soliloquies are monologs, but that monologs are not necessarily soliloquies. Since the soliloquy is an integral part of the drama, it must be differentiated from the prolog and the epilog, as well as the monologic entertainment complete in itself. Nevertheless, there is an intimate relationship between these forms: the soliloquy opening a play is often prologic in its expository purpose; there are rare instances of a soliloquy concluding a piece and merging into an epilog; and, as we have observed, isolated monologs and those addressing an audience during the action of a piece are closely associated with soliloquies. How, then, does the soliloquy differ from other monologs? The answer involves the definition of the soliloquy.

St. Augustine coined the word in Latin, *soliloquium*,<sup>3</sup> evidently from *solus* and *loqui*; hence used by Augustine as a talking to oneself. The English version preserves the root idea; the soliloquy is a speaking alone. When a character, during the course of a drama, is actually alone upon the stage and his speech implies that he believes himself alone, then he is soliloquizing. Even though other characters are present, the speech may be soliloquy if it shows complete isolation and oblivion to surroundings.

<sup>2</sup> U. s., p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> W. W. Skeat, *Etymological Dictionary*, p. 572.

In brief, the soliloquy is an integral part of the drama which consists of a speaking alone. It is therefore apparent that any form of monologic address to the audience—such as the prolog, epilog and choral interlude—is not a soliloquy, since the monologist who harangues the public, cannot perforce consider himself alone.

There is, however, a monolog which is an integral part of the drama, but which nevertheless may be distinguished from the soliloquy,—namely, the little speech commonly known as the “aside.” In order to avoid confusion with the dialogic “aside,” we shall follow Dr. Hennequin<sup>4</sup> in styling this monolog the “apart.” It must be admitted that the distinction between the apart and the soliloquy is a fine one, and indeed Mr. Paull<sup>5</sup> goes so far as to assert that there is no distinction whatever. Let us remember that the soliloquy is a speaking alone: in other words, the soliloquizer believes himself alone, assumes himself alone, or at least completely forgets that he is not alone. The speaker of the apart, on the other hand, never for a moment forgets the proximity of others. When Caesar requests Trebonius to be near him, the latter replies,

“Caesar, I will; (apart) and so near will I be,  
That your best friends shall wish I had been further” (II, 2, 124-125).<sup>6</sup>

There are very few conversant with theatrical matters who would style this speech a soliloquy. The reason is evident; Trebonius is aware of Caesar's presence, and consequently he does not believe himself alone.

The actor who speaks an apart must resort to some trick of delivery, such as eyeing the object of his remarks while muttering as though fearful of being overheard, else facing the audience and blandly taking them into his confidence. In other words, the dramaturgic artifice needs to be supplemented

<sup>4</sup> *The Art of Playwriting*, p. 152. See also article by the same author in the *Forum*, Feb., 1890, Vol. VIII, p. 711.

<sup>5</sup> “Dramatic Convention with Special Reference to the Soliloquy,” by H. M. Paull, *Fortnightly Review*, May, 1899, p. 863 ff.

<sup>6</sup> The line numbering is that of *Shakespeare's Complete Works*, edited by Professor W. A. Neilson, who follows the Globe Edition, with this exception, that he numbers the lines of prose as well as of verse.

by histrionic artifice. Accordingly, Hamlet's "A little more than kin, and less than kind" (I, 2, 65) and the "Still harping on my daughter" of Polonius (II, 2, 188) are invariably delivered with unction.

These speeches nicely harmonize with Dr. Hennequin's description of the apart as "little more than a short monolog something separate from the dialog itself, and yet a potent factor in the total representative effect." That all aparts are not marked by brevity, however, is exemplified by Shylock's speech, beginning,

"How like a fawning publican he looks!" (I, 3, 42-53),

and the Steward's remarks about Timon of Athens:

"O you gods!

Is yon despis'd and ruinous man my lord?" (IV, 3, 464-478).

Such instances suggest a somewhat similar situation in "Hamlet" (III, 3, 73-96). The "Now might I do it pat" affords the only real difficulty in distinguishing between the soliloquy and the apart. The problem does not concern definitions but rather the interpretation brought out by the stage "business." It is a matter of proximity of body as well as of thought. If the speaker is so far removed that he consistently considers himself alone, even though he is reflecting on another character present, the speech may be regarded as soliloquy. The point involves a delicate discrimination between subjectivity and objectivity, and must ultimately be settled by the acting as well as by the text. I prefer to regard Hamlet's speech as a soliloquy: Claudius has retired in prayer, and Hamlet, while conscious of the kneeling king, is virtually alone with his cogitations. It therefore seems best to class the speech as soliloquy. This is the only doubtful case in Shakespeare.

Ordinarily our definition clearly determines the distinction between soliloquy and apart. In the aparts just cited, Shylock and the Steward are not alone either in fancy or reality. Following the convention established by Roman comedy, the apart is almost invariably employed in connection with the overheard soliloquy,—in "Love's Labor's Lost" (IV, 3), for

example,—and then the contrast between the two monologs is evident, the apart being spoken by the eavesdropper, the soliloquy by the person unconscious of the presence of others. X

Having in mind what the soliloquy is not as well as what it is, let us proceed to trace in general outline, its origin and growth up to the time of Shakespeare. Necessarily this discussion must be limited to a brief description of the salient characteristics of the soliloquies of succeeding ages, while matters of detail will be reserved for subsequent chapters.

We have already observed the monolog addressed to the audience as a very possible factor in the origin of the drama, and we have noted that there is an intimate relationship existing between this type and the monologic part of a play which takes no cognizance of auditors and accordingly is called soliloquy; however, one is not justified in assuming a relationship of cause and effect.

Rather may the dramatic soliloquy be explained by the tradition established by the lyric and the epic soliloquy. Friedrich Leo<sup>7</sup> shows that the soliloquy is a conspicuous feature of the earliest Greek poetry,—notably in Homer. Likewise, the old English epic "Beowulf" is not without its soliloquy,—witness the lament of the aged "keeper of rings" (ll. 2247–2266); while some of the oldest lyrics of our tongue are in the form of soliloquies,—for example, "The Song of Deor," the mournful meditations of "The Wanderer" and the strikingly dramatic monolog which is known as "The Banished Wife's Complaint."

Soliloquies are scarce in the beginnings of drama. Even the "tragic triad of immortal fames" of ancient Greece have remarkably few, owing to the fact that speeches which would otherwise be soliloquies are addressed to the chorus, which is almost invariably present. As Leo points out, Aeschylus has, strictly speaking, only three soliloquies, Sophocles two, and "only twice has Euripides removed the chorus from the stage

<sup>7</sup> "Der Monolog im Drama: ein Beitrag zur griechisch-römischen Poetik," *Abhandlung der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen Philologisch-Historische Klasse*, Neue Folge Band X, Nro. 5, Berlin, 1908, pp. 2–6.

in order to make room for monologs,—in the ‘*Alcestis*’ and the ‘*Helena*.’”<sup>8</sup> To be sure, Euripides “doubly redoubles” this number by opening thirteen of his dramas with soliloquies revealing the exposition.

The soliloquies of Aeschylus beginning the “*Agamemnon*” and the “*Eumenides*,” and the speech by the protagonist near the opening of “*Prometheus Bound*” are phrased as prayers to the elements as well as to the gods. Sophocles, in the suicide soliloquy of Ajax and the lament of Electra (ll. 86–120) further illustrates the theatrical power of the soliloquy in the depiction of passion. Sometimes using the form of prayer and sometimes frankly revealing passion, Euripides differentiates one type as a dramaturgic expedient, the initial exposition soliloquy, which recurs so frequently that it practically constitutes a law of his composition.

Seneca continues the tradition of the exposition soliloquy, which, in some cases, seems differentiated as the prolog,—notably in the opening monologs of “*Hercules Furens*,” “*Thyestes*” and “*Troades*,” speeches assigned to propaedeutic characters who make no other appearance during the action. Unlike the Euripidean “*Medea*,” the Senecan tragedy opens with a soliloquy by the protagonist, in the form of an impassioned prayer to the gods for vengeance. The soliloquy of the Nurse, beginning the fourth act of the piece, creates an atmosphere of horror by aid of various rhetorical devices frequent in Seneca, allusions mythological, historical, geographical, metaphorical and hyperbolical. The frenzied incantation of Medea which follows is virtually a soliloquy, although the Nurse stands by during the rapt utterance. Again, at the opening of the second act of “*Agamemnon*,” Clytemnestra deliberately meditates a career of licentiousness,—a speech truly a soliloquy, although the Nurse interrupts by asking the cause of her mistress’s silent (“*tacita*”) brooding. The presence of the confidant, however, prevents many soliloquies in Seneca: no matter how long or introspective the monolog, it is, as a rule, addressed to a nurse, a messenger, or some other character. The arbitrary confidant soon disappears in English

<sup>8</sup> U. s., pp. 9, 12, 33.

drama,—a fact which accounts for the increased number of soliloquies in our tragedy: omit the confidant from Senecan dialog, and there remains pure soliloquy.

The presence of chorus and confidant, then, explains the small number of soliloquies in classic tragedy. Nevertheless, each of the writers of Greek tragedy has left us two or three soliloquies of power. No direct influence of these soliloquies can be traced in the early drama of England, but the indirect influence, through the medium of Seneca, is considerable.

✓ An equally pervasive influence is exerted by the soliloquies of classic comedy. Notwithstanding the chorus in Aristophanes, there are several soliloquies in his pieces, the conspicuous ones occurring at the openings of the "Acharnians," the "Clouds," "Lysistrata," "Plutus" and the "Ecclesiazusae." The last named is notable as being a burlesque of the grand style of the Euripidean exposition soliloquy.

The absence of the chorus in the comedies of Plautus and Terence helps to explain the numerous soliloquies, long and short, which introduce, link and conclude the episodes. Indeed, the interspersed soliloquies are essential in the action. They invariably consist of spirited comments on the intrigue, by way of summarizing or plotting, thus serving either to accentuate the ludicrous situation or to complicate it. Further, so highly wrought is the convention that various artificial varieties of the soliloquy, such as the overheard soliloquy<sup>9</sup> and the feigned soliloquy<sup>9</sup> with interspersed *aparts*, add a novel interest to the *imbroglio*. X

On the other hand, as one might expect, the soliloquies of the English miracle and mystery plays are conspicuously lacking in artifice. As a rule, they are short and infrequent. On the whole, the most characteristic soliloquy of this first period of development is the serious narrative revealing the situation at the opening. It is often crude in its straightforward methods of story-telling and of self-identification. Sometimes it is like the opening of Greek tragedy in that it assumes the form of prayer, and on rare occasions during the action, there are isolated lamentations not dissimilar to those of the classics. There are

<sup>9</sup> See below, pp. 90, 95.

a very few soliloquies of distinction,—notably those whimsically naturalistic revelations of the characters of the three shepherds at the opening of the Towneley "Secunda Pastorum," speeches which happily combine a depiction of human worriments and sympathies with a comic insight which anticipates the method of Shakespeare himself. To these might be added Satan's frank avowal of villainy which opens the play on man's disobedience in the York cycle. This soliloquy, with its note of dramatic irony giving histrionic point to the crude plottings of the villain, subsequently becomes conventionalized, and gains its ultimate expression in the superb declarations of Gloster at the opening of Shakespeare's "Richard the Third."

The self-revelations of the villain and the clown persist in the monologs of the Devil and the Vice of the morality plays, but the distinctive contribution of the morality to the development of the soliloquy is the moralizing theme. Nearly all of the monologs in the morality plays, early and late, are virtually little sermons, and that their didacticism is not without effect is evidenced by the vast amount of moralizing in subsequent soliloquies. In this respect also, the Shakespearean soliloquizer gives the definitive artistic expression to the type. A significant feature of the sermonizing soliloquy of the morality play is its tendency toward introspection together with a disclosure of the workings of conscience. Everyman's simple, heart-felt summaries of the action between the various episodes of the drama perform a function similar to that of the Greek chorus, but they are without the volcanic passion and the elaborate utterance of the classic protagonist.

Perhaps this instance, better than any other, illustrates the vigor and the sincerity of the medieval monolog, crude though it often is, before it inherits the animating fire and the formal vesture of classicism. Senecan influence, added to the rich heritage of such soliloquies as those of "Everyman," made possible the immortal broodings of Hamlet.

The fusing of classical and native traditions which culminated in the tragic and comic soliloquies of Shakespeare was well under way during the second half of the sixteenth century. The few soliloquies bequeathed to the Elizabethans in



that popular translation of Seneca, the "Tenne Tragedies" (1559-1581), stress one aspect of meditation which becomes the dominant note of the English soliloquy,—namely, that of emotional introspection. The English miracles and moralities testify that Seneca is not the source of this conception, but to him may be attributed its elaborate expression. Thus the soliloquies in those Senecan beginnings of English tragedy, "Gorboduc," "Gismond of Salerne," "The Misfortunes of Arthur" and "Jocasta" differ in quantity and quality from their English predecessors. Not only are the new soliloquies more numerous and much longer, but also each is distinguished by proportion and literary finish. Indeed, as acting pieces, these are deficient largely because of the undue prominence given the soliloquy,—an obvious fault in the case of the "Gismond of Salerne," which devotes an entire act to monolog and contains a total of four hundred and fifteen lines of soliloquizing. Nevertheless, although the work of five scholars drawing on Seneca, Dolce and Boccaccio, these soliloquies happily combine the elements of plot, introspection and theatrical effect, and they establish precedents for the soliloquies of romantic tragedy.

Meanwhile the influence of Roman comedy was producing a metamorphosis parallel to that of Roman tragedy. The farces following classical models which appeared in succession after 1550, "Gammer Gurton," "Roister Doister," "Misogonus" and "Supposes," show a decided increase in the prominence of the comic monolog in respect to length, function and style. Now there appears the manipulation of the overheard soliloquy by means of various Plautine and Terentian devices, but particularly noticeable, combined with some touches of native characterization, is the vivacious narrative monolog which flourishes in Roman comedy. To be sure, the sprightly storyteller had made some feeble attempts as a monologist in the person of the Vice, and he had attained a limited dexterity in the hands of John Heywood, but the metallic brilliance of style and the ludicrous insistence on the plot which distinguish the numerous and lengthy soliloquies of "Roister Doister," as well as the few brief ponderings in Shakespeare's "Comedy of

Errors," are the heritage of Plautus and Terence,—an influence which has persisted in the farcical soliloquies of succeeding ages.

Those popular mixtures of tragedy and comedy which throve during the first period of English drama, "Appius and Virginia," "Cambises," "Horestes," "Damon and Pythias" and "Promos and Cassandra," exhibit a curious intermingling of native tradition with Plautine and Senecan influences. Virginius has a number of pseudo-Senecan lamentations, not dissimilar in inflated mood to the mock heroics of Shakespeare's Pyramus and Thisbe. Even closer to the spirit of those inimitable burlesque soliloquies is Cambises' vein, as he informs the audience, with the assurance of the monologist of Roman comedy, that he is bleeding to death, and then, with rant as turgid as that of Seneca, he gasps his last. Horestes, on one occasion, ponders revenge with a suggestion of classical introspection, but the leading monologist of the piece is the Vice, a survival of the medieval buffoon. Both the comic and the serious soliloquies of "Damon and Pythias," on the other hand, show a familiarity with the intricate mechanism as developed by Plautus and Terence, in connection with the attendant complications of eaves-dropping and aparts.

Greater facility and variety characterizes Whetstone's treatment of soliloquies in his double tragedy "Promos and Cassandra." This piece, with which Shakespeare was evidently familiar, seems to typify the technical accomplishment of the soliloquy in the apprentice stage of English play making. There are comic monologs and many aparts, with numerous addresses to the audience. There are two soliloquies explanatory of the disguise in which the speaker appears, a form of meditation which grows frequent as disguise becomes prevalent in romantic drama. There is the announcement by the Messenger, a classic tradition which, with the vanishing of the chorus, assumes the form of the narrative soliloquy. There is the revery of thanksgiving, as well as numerous lamentations on love and death. Moreover, there is a sensational and disgusting bit of stage "business" in Cassandra's apostrophe to the dead, when she kisses the head of Andrugio, brought to her

on a charger<sup>10</sup>—a gruesome detail which does not recur in Shakespeare's "Measure for Measure."

Shakespeare's immediate predecessors add very little to the technic of the soliloquy as we find it in Whetstone. By 1587 the classical forms of soliloquy are fairly well established in England, but thereafter occurs an even more significant contribution to the soliloquy's development: the introspection is distinguished by a spontaneity characteristic of the Renaissance. This is not the crude or ingenuous simplicity of miracle or morality play, but rather a human quality harmonizing with the vivacity of the monolog of classic comedy and the grandeur of the monolog of classic tragedy.

No predecessor of Shakespeare does more for the spontaneity and sincerity of the soliloquy than Thomas Kyd. The ruminating of Basilisco in "Soliman and Persida," a play assigned to Kyd or one of his imitators, contains a suggestion of the comic veracity of the Falstaff soliloquy. Again, "The First Part of Jeronimo," whether by Kyd or an imitator, contains, imbedded in the fustian, soliloquies characteristically graphic and psychologically vivid. Here are depicted the mood of battle, the grapple with death and the heart-beat of affection. Throughout the close of the drama, Jeronimo is wont to enter with a little soliloquy, the theme of which is his pride in his son. As the tone of "The Spanish Tragedy" is somewhat more inflated, so its twenty-nine soliloquies partake of bombast, and yet they reveal thoughts and emotions with the ring of sincerity. Extravagant as are the ravings of Hieronimo, they seem animated by real suffering. His eight soliloquies all have the burden of lament and revenge—a favorite theme for meditation in the revenge of the day.<sup>11</sup>

The soliloquies of the two parts of Marston's "Antonio and Mellida," Professor Thorndike has pointed out,<sup>12</sup> are similar to those of "The Spanish Tragedy" in abundance and

<sup>10</sup> *Six Old Plays*, Vol. I, p. 42.

<sup>11</sup> For a comprehensive epitome of these soliloquies, see "Hamlet and Contemporary Revenge Plays," by A. H. Thorndike, *Pub. of Mod. Lang. Association of America*, Vol. XVII, New Series, Vol. X, pp. 218, 144, 157, 179, 206.

<sup>12</sup> U. s., p. 157.

in reflective character. The difference lies in the increased stress on the romantic, a note struck in the soliloquy with which Antonio opens the tragedy. The sheer histrionic force of Antonio's passion compares not unfavorably with the abandon of Romeo (III, 3, 1-69). Antonio in his anguish falls on the ground, crying,

"Mellida, clod upon clod thus fall.

Hell is beneath, yet heaven is over all" (Part I, IV, 1).

But no matter what the tricks of rhetoric or stage "business," Marston preserves the appearance of introspection, even in the tedious and vapid soliloquies of "Sophonisba."

X But of all the soliloquies preceding Shakespeare, those penned by Christopher Marlowe are most significant in themselves, and in their bearing on the Shakespearean soliloquy. There is nothing original in the subject matter: there are laments and exultations, the cravings of ambition, and many suicide and death soliloquies. In technic Marlowe makes no actual contribution, but he is master of both technic and subject. He adds finish, and he infuses spirit. Therein lies the transformation. The opening exposition soliloquy of the Jew, the closing death soliloquy of Dr. Faustus,—these are definitive. The one is calm, picturesque, characteristic; the other a hoard of lurid images, fears, prayers, curses, accentuated by the stroke of the clock and the lightning flash, and blended into an emotional climax with the agonized cry, "My God! my God! look not so fierce on me."

Marlowe focuses the attention on the leading characters largely by means of the soliloquy. For example, except two supposedly funny monologs which are questionable as to authorship, all<sup>18</sup> of the soliloquies of "Dr. Faustus" are

<sup>18</sup> The precise number of soliloquies in Marlowe is difficult to determine, as indicated by some data which Dr. Rudolf Fischer has collected (*Zur Kunstentwicklung der Englischen Tragödie*, p. 170). He assigns to the two *Tamburlaines* and *Edward the Second* a total of thirty-five soliloquies—a number with which I practically agree; but to *Faustus*, *The Jew* and *Dido* he gives a total of eighty-three, which is different from my count of sixty-one. Dr. Fischer's deductions seem reasonable, that the political dramas, as he styles the first group, are poor in monolog because here action outweighs

spoken by the protagonist, including the speeches which open and close the drama. In Tamburlaine's "Black is the beauty of the brightest day" (Part II, II, 4), "some holy trance" does, as he prays, convey his thoughts away from his surroundings, rendering him completely oblivious to the throng among whom he stands. This soliloquy is the very ecstasy of grief, made poignant by the exquisite refrain, "To entertain divine Zenocrite." The repetition of a word or line is a trick which Marlowe often uses with subtle effect in his soliloquies.

Indeed his verse, always majestic, is most delicately responsive to the mood of the soliloquizer. Collier points out that in "The stars move still" of Faustus, there is "a constant change of pause and inflection, with the introduction of an alexandrine and a hemistich to add to the effect."<sup>14</sup> Says Lowell of Marlowe's art, "In the midst of the hurly-burly there will fall a sudden hush, and we come upon passages calm and pellucid as mountain tarns filled to the brim with the purest distillation of heaven."<sup>15</sup> Such is Tamburlaine's query, "What is beauty, saith my sufferings then?" (Part II, V, 1.) Here we have an aesthetic conception almost too fragile for words, and yet so gracefully phrased that it seems not an articulate thought but rather a longing of the soul.

It was Christopher Marlowe who consecrated the soliloquy as a revelation of thought and feeling. Others of Shakespeare's predecessors—Lyly, Peele, Kyd—attained this conception, but they did not so consistently and successfully maintain it. Lyly gave a note of fancy, Peele of lyric rapture and lament, Kyd of suffering and passion: Marlowe crystallized them all, making the soliloquy an artistic unit. The revenge tragedies and the domestic dramas of the day found channels for the philosophizing soliloquy; and even the late moralities,

reflection, and that the "familiar dramas" are the reverse. Probably the difference in count is due in part to a difference in meaning between the German "monolog" and the English "soliloquy;" but the fact is—and this is the only reason for mentioning the divergence—that it is often difficult to determine whether a speech of Marlowe's is soliloquy or not, because of his tendency to insert meditation in conversation (see p. 161).

<sup>14</sup> *History of English Dramatic Poetry*, Vol. III, p. 131.

<sup>15</sup> *Old English Dramatists*, p. 36.

popular entertainments and chronicle histories, often uncouth and florid, added impetus to the soliloquy's popularity.

X

Through the fervid imagination of the Elizabethans, then, aroused by the imposing monologs of the classics, the English soliloquy, which began its career in the miracle play as a little story of the plot or a prayer or a word to the audience,—this trifling speech developed into a theatrical convention which linked together the episodes of the piece and gave psychological meaning to the action. Such is the soliloquy of Marlowe, and such, with even a more comprehensive reach, is the Shakespearean soliloquy.

Shakespeare received from his master Marlowe an important heritage in this vitalized conception of Senecan introspection as an illumination of the tragic crisis; but, after all, this is only one aspect of the manifold achievements of the Shakespearean soliloquy. For example, Shakespeare so manipulates the serious meditation that it produces a profoundly comic effect. Since the opening of the "*Secunda Pastorum*," there had been instances of ludicrous introspection, a tendency somewhat elaborated by the influx of classicism, but never boldly projected until the appearance of the inimitable musings of Falstaff, Malvolio and Benedick.

Again, we shall find in our study of sources and species that continental and classical plays, poems and novelle had given the love soliloquy, always a favorite device in literature and drama, a pronounced vogue just before Shakespeare, but it was he whose wizardry individualized and epitomized the type in the reveries of *Romeo and Juliet*. Marlowe himself is merely the touchstone to Shakespeare's genius. In lyric grandeur and passionate intensity the meditations of *Tamburlaine* and *Faustus* are unsurpassed, but the soliloquies of *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* are distinguished not only by these qualities but also by a poignant sincerity.

Shakespeare's use of the soliloquy is so comprehensive that it appears to embody all traditions. The moralizing and the depiction of conscience in the morality play, the philosophizing and the introspection of Seneca are fused in his workshop. Likewise, the medieval buffon and Vice, the Plautine rogue

and braggart he knows at first hand, and he casts them into his melting-pot. The details of the craft he learns from all sides: Marlowe has a number of devices for producing the effect of introspection, Plautus and Terence create comic situations by manipulating the overheard soliloquy,—these and many other tricks he employs freely, as we shall observe. Moreover, notwithstanding the fact that he has adopted an astounding variety of methods and types, the result invariably harmonizes with the setting, and nearly every Shakespearean soliloquy is the best of its kind—a masterpiece. No buffoon is quite so funny as Launce, no didactic expounder of the moralities so convincing as Brutus, no rogue of Roman comedy quite so droll as Autolycus, no Senecan protagonist so passionate as Lear.

We have traced rapidly the general lines of development of the soliloquy from its beginnings to the time of Shakespeare, and we have indicated in brief the fusion of the medieval and classical traditions in Shakespeare's soliloquies comic and tragic, ornamental and utilitarian. But Shakespeare's accomplishment is not imitation; rather is it a transformation so complete that it merits being credited with the highest originality.

Since his soliloquies are both comprehensive and definitive, they have served as models for succeeding generations. Neither in spirit nor in function have subsequent soliloquies made any material additions, and indeed they have lacked, for the most part, any suggestion of the vitality and inspiration of the master. Nevertheless, pseudo-Shakespearean soliloquies flourished on the English stage well into the nineteenth century, and they still persist in closet drama. Toward the close of the century the soliloquies abruptly dwindled in length and number, and now they have almost entirely disappeared.

The disappearance of the soliloquy is a curious phenomenon. Its abolition is not a new idea, since in 1660 Corneille remarked that "the style has so completely changed that the greater part of my late works do not contain a single soliloquy; and you will find none in 'Pompée,' 'La suite du menteur,' 'Théodore' and 'Pertharite,'—nor in 'Héraclius,' 'Andromède,' 'Oedipe' and

'La toison d'or,' with the exception of stanzas."<sup>16</sup> It is significant that Molière's practice harmonizes with Corneille's principle of abstinence: there are virtually no soliloquies in the great achievements, "Tartuffe," "Le misanthrope," "Don Juan," "Le bourgeois gentilhomme," "Les femmes savantes" and the "Précieuses ridicules," while the author's most realistic sketches, the "Critique," the "Impromptu" and the "Comtesse d'Escarbagnnes" have no soliloquies whatever.

A century later Cailhava testifies that soliloquies have their critics who want to banish them utterly, and their partisans who want to multiply them.<sup>17</sup> In another century interest in the existence of the soliloquy becomes wide spread, and we find in England such sentiments as those of Mr. Archer, who reserves the soliloquy for farce and poetical drama, asserting that "the soliloquy should be almost entirely tabooed in serious plays."<sup>18</sup> Mr. Paull follows with a plea for the complete abolition of the soliloquy in comedies of modern life, citing Ibsen's usage, French criticism and recent curtailing of soliloquies by Pinero and Jones.<sup>19</sup>

Ibsen is usually given credit for the disappearance of the soliloquy in the acted drama of today. Mr. Henderson quotes Ibsen's observation that his "League of Youth" is carried through "without a single monolog,—in fact, without a single aside," and the critic affirms, "In this respect, I believe Ibsen sounded the death-knell of the monolog, the soliloquy, the aside, and by his practice soon rendered ridiculous those dramatists who persisted in employing these devices."<sup>20</sup> Not Ibsen but Edison is responsible for the disrepute of the soliloquy, according to Professor Brander Matthews, who points out that the electric lighting of the modern stage and the picture-frame effect of the proscenium arch produce a realistic

<sup>16</sup> *Oeuvres*, edited by Marty-Laveaux, Vol. I, p. 45.

<sup>17</sup> *De l'art de la comédie*, by J. F. de Cailhava d'Estendoux, Paris, 1786, Vol. I, p. 225.

<sup>18</sup> *English Dramatists of Today*, by William Archer, London, 1882, p. 274.

<sup>19</sup> "Dramatic Convention with Special Reference to the Soliloquy," by H. M. Paull, *Fortnightly Review*, May, 1899, p. 863 ff.

<sup>20</sup> "The Evolution of Dramatic Technic," by Archibald Henderson, *North American Review*, March, 1909, p. 439.



setting totally at variance with the arbitrary convention of the soliloquy.<sup>21</sup> Doubtless this is an important factor in the explanation; doubtless, also, there is truth in Mr. Paull's aphorism: "A convention that is questioned is doomed; its existence depends upon its unhesitating acceptance."<sup>22</sup>

Objection has frequently been made to the lengthy soliloquy, —by a reporter of Pesaro in 1574,<sup>23</sup> by the Earl of Mulgrave in his "Essay on Poetry" (1717), and by a host of critics of the last half-century. Mr. Henderson voices the consensus of modern opinion in his statement that "the soliloquy of a sane man in actual life is of an exceedingly brief interval of time—a few words or, at most, a few sentences. . . . Dramatic craftsmanship has today reached a point of such complex excellence that the best dramatists refuse to employ so unworthy a device as the lengthy soliloquy."<sup>24</sup>

The principle is not a new one. Nearly two centuries ago the Earl of Mulgrave ordained:

"First then, Soliloquies had need be few,  
Extremely short, and spoke in Passion too."<sup>25</sup>

The same requirements were made by the German critic Gottsched in 1730: "Kluge Leute pflegen nicht laut zu reden, wenn sie allein sind; es wäre denn in besondern Affekten, und das zwar mit wenig Worten."<sup>26</sup> Ramler (1756-58) echoes the sentiment, insisting that the soliloquy should be short, or if long, that the speaker must be "in einer heftigen Gemüths-bewegung."<sup>27</sup> Joseph von Sonnenfels (1768), the Viennese

<sup>21</sup> "Concerning the Soliloquy," by Brander Matthews, *Putnam's Monthly*, Nov., 1906, p. 180 ff. See also *A Study of the Drama*, by Brander Matthews, p. 64.

<sup>22</sup> U. s., p. 870.

<sup>23</sup> *Geschichte des Neueren Dramas*, by Wilhelm Creizenach, Vol. II, p. 287, note 2.

<sup>24</sup> U. s., p. 440.

<sup>25</sup> *An Essay on Poetry*, London, 1717, p. 308.

<sup>26</sup> *Versuch einer Critischen Dichtkunst*, p. 598.

<sup>27</sup> *Einleitung in die schönen Wissenschaften*, by S. K. W. Ramler, Vol. II, p. 246 ff. For this and several other citations in this chapter, I am indebted to the valuable monograph by Friedrich Düsel, *Der dramatische Monolog in*

theatrical censor and stage manager, is even more stringent in his limitations; he repudiates the soliloquy except by way of broken exclamations during the moment of passion when "die Leidenschaft auf das Höchste gespannt und das Herz gleichsam zu enge ist, den Inneren Kampf in sich zu fassen."<sup>28</sup> Thus he anticipates the law enunciated by Mr. Archer (1882): "A few broken exclamations under high emotion is all the soliloquy that strict art should permit, for high emotion does in many cases manifest itself in speech."<sup>29</sup>

On the other hand, the lengthy emotional soliloquy has been warmly admired by many critics. "I confess," admits the Abbé d'Aubignac in his "Pratique du Théâtre," englished in 1684, "that it is sometimes very pleasant to see a man upon the stage lay open his heart, and speak boldly of his most secret thoughts, explain his designs, and give vent to all that his passion suggests; but without doubt it is very hard to make an Actor do it with probability."<sup>30</sup> The soliloquy is most likely to be appreciated and defended as a revelation of thought and feeling. Says William Congreve in his Epistle Dedicatory to "The Double-Dealer" (1694): "When a man in soliloquy reasons with himself, and *pro's* and *con's*, and weighs all his designs, we ought not to imagine that this man either talks to us or to himself; he is only thinking, and thinking such matter as were inexcusable folly in him to speak." Says Diderot (1756): "L'homme ne se parle à lui-même que dans des instants de perplexité";<sup>31</sup> and Nicolai (1757) elaborates the thought, urging that the sorrowful, the angry and the irresolute should be allowed to talk to themselves.<sup>32</sup> In the same year (1757), Mendelssohn eulogizes the soliloquy as an outpouring of the soul.<sup>33</sup> The "Poétique française" (1763) of

*der Poetik des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts und in dem Dramen Lessings*, Hamburg und Leipzig, Verlag von Leopold Vosz, 1897.

<sup>28</sup> Quoted by Düsel, p. 15.

<sup>29</sup> *English Dramatists of Today*, p. 274.

<sup>30</sup> *The Whole Art of the Stage*, p. 57.

<sup>31</sup> *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. by J. Assézat, Tom. Sept., Paris, 1875; *Belles Lettres* IV, Chap. XVII.

<sup>32</sup> Friedrich Nicolai, "Abhandlung vom Trauerspiele," *Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften und der freyen Künste*, Vol. I, p. 48.

<sup>33</sup> *Gesammelte Schriften*, 1843, Vol. I, p. 321 ff.

Marmontel boldly proclaims the naturalism of the soliloquy: "il est tout naturel de se parler à soi-même."<sup>34</sup> Cailhava (1772) maintains that it is natural for one to talk to himself when he is greatly affected, and he stoutly defends the soliloquy of Shakespeare's *Timon* (IV, 3) on this basis.<sup>35</sup> Sir Walter Scott (1822) is as emphatic as Congreve in his conception of the soliloquy as "a conventional medium of communication betwixt the poet and the audience";<sup>36</sup> while Joanna Baillie (1832) defines the soliloquy as "Those overflowings of the perturbed soul, in which it unburthens itself of those thoughts which it cannot communicate to others."<sup>37</sup> The soliloquy reveals the "most secret feeling and volition," according to Freytag (1863);<sup>38</sup> and Mr. Price thus pleads for the soliloquy: "Drama is life and men make their most serious resolves in solitude and alone."<sup>39</sup> Coleridge, commenting on the revelation of the King's conscience in "*Hamlet*" (III, 2), suggests that "even as an audible soliloquy, it is far less improbable than is supposed by such as have watched men only in the beaten road of their feelings."<sup>40</sup> Delius loyally defends the emotional soliloquies of "*Romeo and Juliet*," "*Hamlet*," "*Othello*," "*Lear*" and "*Macbeth*";<sup>41</sup> and Kilian believes that "the soliloquy is beginning to enjoy anew its literary prestige undiminished."<sup>42</sup> The consensus of modern opinion, however, illustrated by practice as well as theory, is to the effect that if soliloquies are permissible at all, they "had need be few, extremely short, and spoke in passion too."

It is a well known fact that every art has its conventions. The sculptor and the painter, as well as the dramatist, make use of certain arbitrary contrivances contrary to nature but necessary as media of expression, such conventions implying a

<sup>34</sup> Second edition, Paris, 1767, Vol. I, p. 359 ff.

<sup>35</sup> *De l'art de la comédie*, Paris, 1786, Vol. I, p. 229.

<sup>36</sup> *The Fortunes of Nigel*, Part II, Chap. V.

<sup>37</sup> "Introductory Discourse" to *Complete Works*, Philadelphia, 1832, p. 23.

<sup>38</sup> *Technique of the Drama*, translated by Elias MacEwan, p. 218.

<sup>39</sup> *Technique of the Drama*, by W. T. Price, 1892, p. 127.

<sup>40</sup> *Furness Variorum Hamlet*, Vol. I, p. 280.

<sup>41</sup> *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, Vol. XVI, p. 1 ff.

<sup>42</sup> *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, Vol. XXXIX, p. xiv.

tacit understanding with the patron of the art. No one has a right to object to a statue because it lacks color, to a painting because it lacks motion, nor to an interior setting of a play because there is no fourth wall. These are permanent conventions inhering in their respective arts as long as the arts endure. On the other hand, there are temporary conventions, technical devices which are accepted at one time and place and rejected at another.<sup>43</sup> The soliloquy has been perhaps the most persistent of the temporary conventions of the drama. Thus for centuries it has been a means of imparting information as to the plot as well as to the secret convictions of a character,—the assumption being that the soliloquizer is talking or thinking to himself, although in reality he is addressing the audience.

Obviously, the soliloquizer talks to himself. That people do talk to themselves is undeniable, but that young, healthy persons audibly set forth their secret ideas at great length is preposterous. That they do so in soliloquy, however, is entirely satisfactory so long as the convention is unquestioned, because the convention is a matter of technic wholly independent of nature. It is a means rather than an end. By aid of the soliloquy, the playwright informs the auditor what a character would say if he were in the habit of talking to himself.

Sometimes the dramatist goes a step farther, and uses the soliloquy as a *milieu* for disclosing inaudible thoughts. In that case, the soliloquizer is represented not as talking to himself but as thinking to himself, and we pass from the frank convention to one subtly suggestive. When this type of soliloquy is used with full effect, as it often is in the great tragedies of Shakespeare, the auditor forgets the medium of speech, merely realizing that he is becoming aware of the thoughts and the emotions of the soliloquizer. A similar illusion occurs in the reading of a novel, as Sir Walter Scott pointed out,<sup>44</sup>—the only difference being that the soliloquy of

<sup>43</sup> See *The Development of the Drama*, by Brander Matthews, p. 2 ff.; also "The Convention of the Drama" in *The Historical Novel and Other Essays*, by Brander Matthews.

<sup>44</sup> *The Fortunes of Nigel*, Part II, Chapter V.

fiction is transmitted by aid of the printed page instead of the spoken word. [When Hamlet muses, "To be or not to be," we give no heed to the fact that he is talking, for our whole attention is vibrantly sympathetic with the workings of his brain and the feelings of his heart. The methods by which words are used to symbolize thoughts and moods we shall consider in detail (Chapter VI), but at the outset it must be borne in mind that the soliloquy is a convention for the portrayal of either speech or thought.

[All soliloquies, then, may be classified as either verbal or mental, the former occurring much more frequently than the latter. The verbal soliloquizers are assumed to be talking to themselves; they often state the fact, and frequently apostrophe is used as speech. The verbal soliloquy, particularly in comedy, seems to take its rise in the direct address to the audience, and sometimes a parenthetical word to the hearers occurs in a speech which in other respects ranks as a comic soliloquy,—for example, Falstaff's "O, you shall see him laugh till his face be like a wet cloak ill laid up" ("The Second Part of Henry the Fourth," V, 1, 93-95).

[The mental soliloquizer, according to the convention, is thinking to himself. Often he refers to his thoughts, and the matter and the manner of his utterance are far removed from ordinary speech. The mental soliloquy is not necessarily intellectual, as it may be dominated by the emotions, but never for an instant does it suggest a knowledge of the audience, an implication from which the verbal soliloquy cannot always be absolved. To be sure, it is sometimes difficult to decide whether the soliloquizer is talking or thinking, but the general distinction is clearly made, and certain instances prove that it was recognized by the dramatist. Shakespeare employs both types. For example, Macbeth meditates (I, 3) in the presence of his friends, and they do not hear him;<sup>45</sup> while Malvolio (II, 5) talks to himself and is overheard by others.

Another classification of soliloquies, based on an interpretation of the mood rather than of the convention, is made possible by the fact that soliloquies tend to produce the effect of

<sup>45</sup> For a detailed analysis of the passage, see pp. 145, 161.

tragedy or of comedy. Malvolio's revery is amusing, and Macbeth's tragically intense; and, as a rule, comic soliloquies are projected frankly as speech, while tragic ones suggest passionate cogitation. The rule has a number of exceptions, however,—notably Benedick's and Falstaff's musings, the comedy of which is largely dependent upon their introspective character.

Still another classification takes cognizance of the other two, but with special reference to technic, and this arrangement we shall strive to follow. We shall consider the comic soliloquy and the tragic soliloquy, with their various subdivisions and their various aspects of verbal and mental disclosure; and, in addition, we shall examine a third class of soliloquies the distinguishing feature of which is their utility in the mechanism of the piece. They supply necessary portions of the story, open, close and join scenes, and the like.

Accordingly, after a brief investigation of some data relative to the quantity, sources and chronological development of the Shakespearean soliloquy, we shall turn our attention to those soliloquies which have a mechanical reason for being, subdividing them as exposition monologs and devices accompanying the action. Second, we shall study the comic monologs of Shakespeare as such, observing the stock devices as well as the original contributions of the master dramatist, a method which requires some inquiry into the growth of types. Indeed, throughout the discussion, comparisons with Greek, Roman, Hindu and early English soliloquies—as well, occasionally, as those of modern times—will be found of value in measuring Shakespeare's achievement. Such comparisons will be of especial interest in our investigation of the soliloquies of Shakespearean tragedy. These, the culmination of Shakespeare's genius in the depiction of solitary reflection and emotion, will constitute the third and last division of our subject matter, and we shall regard them as revelations of thought and feeling.

Shakespeare's soliloquies reveal the most intimately personal and at the same time the most profoundly comprehensive thoughts of his characters; and they have the distinction—aside

from the few borrowings which we shall presently note—of constituting the most original portion of his work. Moreover, they are seldom mere anecdotes, philosophizings or lyrical outbursts attached to a play by way of ornamentation; but instead, arranged to further characterization and action, they are fused in the structure of the drama.

## CHAPTER II

### THE NUMBER, SOURCES AND CHRONOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF SHAKESPEARE'S SOLILOQUIES

The soliloquies of Shakespeare, extending over nearly a quarter of a century, include practically every variety which had hitherto appeared, long and short, comic and tragic, crude and subtle. At first glance, the sequence and quantity of the soliloquies seem to have little to do with their technical accomplishment. For example, "Cymbeline," containing the greatest number of lines of soliloquy of any of Shakespeare's plays, follows in chronological order, "Coriolanus," which has, with a single exception, the least number, and in other respects the monologs of the two pieces are practically without points of resemblance. Nevertheless, the mere quantity of Shakespeare's soliloquies has its meaning, especially today when critical opinion is almost unanimous as to the approximate order of Shakespeare's plays. Accordingly, we shall find the following table significant in our study. The exact number of soliloquies and lines is no more definitive than the dates, although the count has been carefully made. The fact is that, in certain rare instances, personal opinion and interpretation must determine whether or not a monolog is a soliloquy—Hamlet's "Now might I do it pat," for example.<sup>1</sup> In general, however, a soliloquy is easily identified, and, moreover, the following tabulation is of importance not as to exact numbers, but as to approximate and relative values.

1589?	Henry VI, Part I .....	11	90
1590?	Henry VI, Part II .....	12	221
1590?	Henry VI, Part III .....	21	351
?	Titus Andronicus .....	8	85
1591?	Love's Labour's Lost .....	8	153
1591-5?	The Two Gentlemen of Verona.....	16	297
1591?	The Comedy of Errors.....	7	62

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 4.



1593?	King John .....	5	91
1593?	Richard III .....	17	245
1594?	Richard II .....	3	79
1594?	A Midsummer Night's Dream .....	21	237
1595?	The Taming of the Shrew .....	11	78
1595?	The Merchant of Venice .....	3	41
1596?	Romeo and Juliet .....	20	293
1597?	Henry IV, Part I .....	8	142
1598?	Henry IV, Part II .....	7	177
1599	Henry V .....	7	131
1598-9?	The Merry Wives of Windsor .....	16	195
1599?	Julius Caesar .....	16	158
1599?	Much Ado about Nothing .....	7	118
1600?	As You Like It .....	6	36
1601?	Twelfth Night .....	8	213
1602?	Troilus and Cressida .....	10	144
1602?	All's Well that Ends Well .....	10	123
1603?	Measure for Measure .....	8	131
1603-4	Hamlet .....	14	291
1604?	Othello .....	15	172
1604-5?	King Lear .....	17	185
1605-6?	Macbeth .....	18	245
1607?	Timon of Athens .....	11	210
1608?	Pericles .....	7	100
1607-8?	Antony and Cleopatra .....	9	92
1609?	Coriolanus .....	4	36
1610?	Cymbeline .....	24	430
1611?	Winter's Tale .....	6	153
1612?	The Tempest .....	5	73
1612?	Henry VIII .....	3	59

These figures show the great importance which Shakespeare gives the soliloquy. Such different plays as "Cymbeline," "The Third Part of Henry the Sixth," "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," "Hamlet" and "Romeo and Juliet" contain some three hundred or more lines of soliloquy. On the other hand, however, equally representative pieces, "As You Like It," "Coriolanus" and "The Merchant of Venice," have less than fifty lines of soliloquy. Clearly the prominence given the soliloquy is independent of the species of drama. In general,

the soliloquies are quantitatively more conspicuous at the beginning than at the close of Shakespeare's career. Evidently there are numerous exceptions to the rule. "Titus Andronicus," "The Comedy of Errors" and "King John" have a notable scarcity of soliloquies, possibly because the author was remaking or adapting old plays and consequently saw the benefits of condensation. "The Merchant of Venice" is so full of stories that there seems no room for soliloquy, while, on the other hand, "As You Like It" is so surcharged with reflective and lyric elements that the author has wisely reduced the soliloquies to a minimum. Here also he may have observed the fatally retarding effect of the lengthy soliloquies in his source. Most extraordinary is the bewildering length and profusion of soliloquies in "Cymbeline," at a time when the playwright seemed to be systematically reducing his soliloquies to mere mechanical devices for furthering the plot. The many soliloquies of "Cymbeline," we shall observe, are due to the author's departure to a new field, the "dramatic romance." But the greatest numerical achievement, in respect to both number and length of soliloquies, occurs when the soliloquy is most profoundly introspective,—that is, from "Hamlet" to "Timon," inclusive. This observation suggests a certain interdependence of the quantity and the quality of the Shakespearean soliloquy. Indeed it is a fact that, with the exception of Wolsey's farewell—which is probably not Shakespeare's—there are no famous soliloquies in the pieces marked by a paucity of soliloquy. The converse of the proposition is not necessarily true, as the crude monologs of "The Third Part of Henry the Sixth" prove, and yet the most perfect instances of the Shakespearean soliloquy come not single file but in battalions,—witness all the soliloquies of "Romeo and Juliet," "Hamlet" and "Macbeth."

Allusion has already been made to the sources of Shakespeare's soliloquies. The question naturally arises, to what extent did these influence the dramatist? Is the soliloquy the most original part of the author's work? A study of the sources discloses some interesting answers to these queries.

The "Chronicles" of Holinshed, supplemented by those of Halle, contain many hints for the content of Shakespeare's soliloquies. In three instances of "The First Part of Henry the Sixth," the kernel of the soliloquy is found in Holinshed,<sup>2</sup> and others grow out of situations suggested by the chronicle. In discussing the three parts of "Henry the Sixth," we are not entering into the question of authorship, for, whether written by Shakespeare or some of his contemporaries, or by both, these soliloquies are, at all events, typical of the historical drama at the time Shakespeare was beginning his career.<sup>3</sup>

The problem of the sources of the second and third parts is complicated by the existence of the two plays, "The First Part of the Contention of the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster" and "The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York,"<sup>4</sup> the soliloquies of which are very similar to the Shakespearean ones. Each of the nine soliloquies of the "Contention" has its counterpart in "Part Two," with the same trend and many of the same words, but usually Shakespeare amplifies and embellishes. His three additional soliloquies<sup>5</sup> are ornamental rather than organic. The relation of the soliloquies of the plays to Holinshed and Halle is as follows. Slight material for two of Shakespeare's soliloquies and for one of the "Contention" is found in Holinshed,<sup>6</sup> and the situations for three of Shakespeare's soliloquies and two of

<sup>2</sup> I, 2, 173-176 founded on Holinshed, III, 591/2/5; III, 1, 78-81, on Holinshed, III, 597/2/14; III, 1, 187-201, on Holinshed, III, 581/1/68.

<sup>3</sup> It might be well at this juncture to state that we shall investigate all of the soliloquies in the plays included by Professor W. A. Neilson in his edition of Shakespeare's *Works*. Whenever it is presumable that Shakespeare did not write the soliloquies—as in the case of all those in *Henry the Eighth*, the first six in *Pericles* and five in *Timon*—we shall note the fact in any detailed discussion of them. On the other hand, in the case of "doubtful" plays such as *Henry the Sixth* and *Titus Andronicus*, Shakespeare may or may not have written the soliloquies, and this fact must be admitted at the outset.

<sup>4</sup> Printed in the (old) Shakespeare Society Publications, 1843.

<sup>5</sup> III, 2, 136-146; IV, 1, 144-147; and IV, 10, 1-17.

<sup>6</sup> III, 1, 330-383—*Contention*, p. 38—Holinshed, III, 632/1/63; V, 2, 66-71—Holinshed, III, 643/2/9.

the "Contention" appear in Holinshed.<sup>7</sup> Likewise, in the case of "Part Three," the majority of situations which make possible the Shakespearean soliloquies, together with those in the "True Tragedy," occur in the chronicle. In one instance, the imagery of Shakespeare is suggested by Halle.<sup>8</sup> The figure of the ebb and flow does not appear in the corresponding soliloquy of the "True Tragedy," a speech which is also without Shakespeare's lengthy moralizing on the shepherd's life. However, the dexterity of Shakespeare's devices in the manipulation of the overheard soliloquy and the explanation of disguise is evidenced in the "True Tragedy." There too the smiling damned villain proclaims himself with Marlowesque egoism. Gloucester's elaborate soliloquy in "Part Three" (III, 2, 124-195), an embellishment of one in the "True Tragedy," is apparently the inspiration of the famous opening of "Richard the Third," a soliloquy entirely original.

Six of the eighteen soliloquies of "Richard the Third" have a basis in Holinshed, but, as in the case of the chronicle sources of "Henry the Sixth," none of them are in the form of soliloquy, unless we except the hint that Holinshed drops (III, 755/1/45) that Richard's dream "troubled his mind with manie busie and dreadfull imaginations." These "imaginations" are bodied forth in soliloquy in "The True Tragedy of Richard the Third,"<sup>9</sup> but it remained for Shakespeare to render them as real as fear itself (V, 3, 177-206). No direct connection can be traced between the soliloquies of the "True Tragedy" and those of "Richard the Third," and yet there are many similarities, indicating that Shakespeare was familiar with the traditions of soliloquy clinging to the theme. Both have an exceptionally large number of soliloquies—"Richard the Third" sixteen, and the "True Tragedy" eighteen. Each has many long soliloquies, the most conspicuous being by Richard, who discloses his villainous ambitions and plottings—as he does in the academical piece, "Richardus Tertius," for

<sup>7</sup> IV, 10, 1-17, 18-25 and 82-90—*Contention*, pp. 62-63—Halle, 222 (*Shakespeare's Holinshed*, p. 283).

<sup>8</sup> II, 5, 1-10—Halle, 256 (*Shakespeare's Holinshed*, p. 306).

<sup>9</sup> (Old) Shakespeare Society Publication, 1844, Vol. XXI, p. 61.

that matter. Richard of the "True Tragedy" soliloquizes,

"Methinks their ghoasts comes gaping for revenge" (p. 61),

which brings to mind the Shakespearean parallel,

"Methought the souls of all that I had murder'd  
Came to my tent" (V, 3, 204-5).

But such an evidence of borrowing is tenuous at the best.

The soliloquies of "Richard the Second" and of "Henry the Fourth" are quite independent of Holinshed. True, Holinshed contains the situation for Prince Hal's soliloquy on the crown,<sup>10</sup> but the real origin of this soliloquy is evidently the one by the Prince in "The Famous Victories of Henry the Fifth."<sup>11</sup> There, however, he makes no mention of the crown which he carries off with him, and the audience would probably lose the point of his exit. Shakespeare remedied the defect, beginning the soliloquy,

"Why does the crown lie there upon his pillow?"

There follows a long apostrophe to the crown, and still another concludes the soliloquy. The difference of treatment illustrates the transforming process to which Shakespeare subjected his sources. Likewise, except for two faint hints in Holinshed, the soliloquies of "Henry the Fifth" are original. The soul-searching soliloquies of "Macbeth" are not due to Holinshed, unless it be in his remark, "The pricke of conscience (as it chanceth ever in tyrants, and such as atteine to anie estate by unrighteous means) caused him ever to feare least he should be served of the same cup, as he had ministered to his predecessor"<sup>12</sup>—which seems the origin of Macbeth's soliloquizing,

"This even handed justice  
Commends the ingredients of our poisoned chalice  
To our own lips" (I, 7, 9-11).

"The pricke of conscience," it is needless to add, is the well-spring of nearly all of Macbeth's meditations. It is only in

<sup>10</sup> *The Second Part of Henry the Fourth*, IV, 5, 20-47.

<sup>11</sup> *Six Old Plays*, p. 343.

<sup>12</sup> Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*, Vol. II, p. 64.

hints such as this, and never in the form of soliloquy, that the chronicle may be said, in any sense, to give rise to the Shakespearean revery.

Plutarch affords suggestions for soliloquizing a trifle more definite than those of Holinshed. Six of the soliloquies of "Julius Ceasar" have some basis in Plutarch, although none of them have a soliloquy as a source. Plutarch does, however, indicate the reflective character of Brutus. "But when night came and he was in his own house . . . oftentimes of himself he fell into such deep thoughts of this enterprise, casting in his mind all the dangers that might happen"<sup>13</sup>—perhaps this was the starting-point of the soliloquies at the beginning of the second act. Again, there is a hint of meditation just before the appearance of Caesar's ghost: in the "Life" of Brutus, "As he was in his tent with a little light, thinking of weighty matters" (p. 136); and in the "Life" of Caesar, "being yet awake and thinking of his affairs" (p. 103). "The Life of Coriolanus" lacks even such feeble impetus toward soliloquy. The only resemblance is a trifling verbal one. Coriolanus soliloquizes,

"My love's upon  
This enemy town. I'll enter" (IV, 4, 23-24).

Plutarch quotes Homer,

"So did he enter into the enemies towne" (p. 169).

Plutarch's "Antony and Cleopatra," however, is a source worth noting. Here for the first time in our investigation, there is a soliloquy in the narrative which Shakespeare uses for dramatic purposes. "Antonius believing it" (that Caesar was dead) "sayd unto himselfe: what doest thou looke for further, Antonius, sith spiteful fortune hath taken from thee the only joy thou haddest, for whom thou yet reservedst thy life? when he had sayd these words, he went into a chamber and unarmed himselfe, and being naked, said thus: O Cleopatra, it grieveth me not that I have lost thy companie, for I will not be long from thee: but I am sorry, that having bene so great a Captaine and Emperour, I am indeede condemned to

<sup>13</sup> "The Life of Marcus Brutus," in Skeat's *Shakespeare's Plutarch*, p. 115.

be judged of lesse courage and noble mind than a woman."<sup>14</sup> Here it is not the phraseology which Shakespeare uses, but the occasion of the soliloquy and its mood. Thus inspired, he transfuses the speech with the wizardry of his expression.

Shakespeare invariably betters his instruction, a fact strikingly evident when he adapts plays already containing soliloquies. He discerns their weaknesses and proceeds to eliminate them. The "Menaechmi" of Plautus has no less than eighteen soliloquies: Shakespeare omits the parasite and the old man and consequently their long monologs. He neither borrows any soliloquy, nor does he have any overheard soliloquy, although there are three in his Roman model. The lucid rehearsal of the complications by the soliloquizer reflects the classical form and spirit; but the scarcity and brevity of the soliloquies for the purposes of farce, are characteristics peculiarly modern.

Again, in abridging and transforming the two parts of "The Troublesome Raigne of King John" (printed 1591), Shakespeare omits his predecessor's soliloquies, except the one in which Arthur leaps from the walls and dies (IV, 3, 1-10). This he preserves with only slight alteration and condensation. The early plays contain two soliloquies by the Bastard, his vigorous personality shining through rather stilted verse.<sup>15</sup> Shakespeare's Bastard has two soliloquies which are satiric masterpieces (I, 1, 182-219; II, 1, 561-598). "The Troublesome Raigne" has three long soliloquies by John (pp. 273, 282, 287), and the Shakespearean piece two very brief ones (IV, 2, 181; V, 1, 25-29). Likewise, when Shakespeare made his "Measure for Measure" from the two parts of "Promos and Cassandra," he applied even more radical methods of omission and change. Whetstone has a total of thirty-nine soliloquies,<sup>16</sup> Shakespeare seven.

In "The Taming of the Shrew," the author reverses the process and increases the amount of soliloquy. With the six

<sup>14</sup> Furness Variorum Edition of *Antony and Cleopatra*, p. 405. Cf. IV, 4, 44-49.

<sup>15</sup> *Six Old Plays*, Vol. 2, pp. 239, 252.

<sup>16</sup> For a discussion of these soliloquies, see *ante*, p. 10.

soliloquies of the old "Taming of a Shrew" (printed 1594) may be contrasted the eleven of Shakespeare's. There is no connection, except in respect to the serio-comic plottings of Petruchio (II, 1, 169-182; IV, 1, 191-214), which get their theme and general treatment from a little soliloquy by Ferando.<sup>17</sup>

As to quantity, the soliloquies of the old "Leir" (acted 1593) are similar to those of Shakespeare, but, aside from the general apportionment of villainous plotting, ravings of Lear, and comments of Kent or Perillus, there is no real basis of comparison.

So the soliloquies of "Timon" may be compared with their predecessors only along general lines. The probably academic "Timon" (c. 1602) has six soliloquies, three of which are by the protagonist, but it is only in the bitterness of Timon's soliloquies, in addition to their conspicuous character, that there is any similarity to those of Shakespeare. A much closer parallelism exists between the soliloquies of Shakespeare and Lucian, both in mood and content as well as details. Each has two soliloquies of length in which Timon digs, discovers gold, indulges in mock prayer and rails against mankind.

Thus it is evident that the chief indebtedness of Shakespeare to previous playwrights is only in general outlines, assignment to certain speakers, a theme, a hint, or a word. Shakespeare may have a hand in the "Contention" and "The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York." Surely the soliloquies in these and the corresponding Shakespearean pieces are strikingly similar, and, in large part, identical. But if these are excluded as sources, the only soliloquy which Shakespeare directly transferred from another, and that with some alteration, is Arthur's soliloquy in "King John," a speech of no interest, except as an explanation of a spectacular death. "The True Tragedy of Richard the Third" gives the delirious mood of the final soliloquy of Shakespeare's Richard, the "Famous Victories" presents the situation of the "crown" soliloquy, and "A Shrew" offers a motif for Petruchio's reflections. Here the direct indebtedness to plays ends, and we must admit that it is slight.

<sup>17</sup> (Old) Shakespeare Society Publications, 1844, p. 28.



If we could examine the Kydian play on which "Hamlet" is supposed to be founded, we might find a source of far greater interest, but, instead, we must content ourselves with conjectures based on the untrustworthy evidence of the seventeenth century German redaction of the theme, and the notoriously corrupt First Quarto. An examination of the ten brief and crude soliloquies of "Der Bestrafte Brudermord"<sup>18</sup> fails to suggest many Shakespearean characteristics, although here, as in our dramas, it is in monolog that Hamlet decides on the play (II, 6) that the King, smitten by conscience, kneels in prayer (III, 1), and that Hamlet refrains from stabbing him (III, 2). Hamlet's five soliloquies consist chiefly of the bald statement that he will be avenged, although the last one (V, 1) sounds a deeper note of introspection: "Unfortunate Prince! how much longer must thou live without peace? How long dost thou delay, O righteous Nemesis! before thou whettest thy righteous sword of vengeance for my uncle the fratricide? Hither have I come once more, but cannot attain to my revenge, because the fratricide is surrounded all the time by so many people. But I swear that, before the sun has finished his journey from east to west, I will revenge myself on him." "In the reference to Nemesis," observes Professor Thorndike,<sup>19</sup> "in the excuse for delay, and the promise to revenge, I fancy there are some faint hints of a soliloquy which in its original form may not have been unlike those in the 'Spanish Tragedy.'" Professor Thorndike points out that in the First Quarto version of the fourth soliloquy, Hamlet is introduced "pouring upon a book" "just as Hieronimo and Antonio enter reading when they begin their soliloquies. The appearance of this theatrical convention," he argues, "suggests that it may go back to the early 'Hamlet' and that the soliloquy may have had an original form in the early play."<sup>20</sup> The probabilities are strong that Shakespeare revised some early soliloquies when he wrote the drama of which the First Quarto is the imperfect copy.

<sup>18</sup> Furness Variorum Edition of *Hamlet*, Vol. II, p. 121.

<sup>19</sup> "Hamlet and Contemporary Revenge Plays," *Pub. of Mod. Lang. As. of America*, Vol. XVII, p. 151.

<sup>20</sup> U. s., p. 171, note 2.

The First Quarto is so corrupt, however, that it is an unsafe basis for arguments. Its soliloquies are, for the most part, short, crude and uncouth in their phrasing. The delicate depiction of conscience in the King's prayer (III, 3, 36-72) is scarcely recognizable in the First Quarto: it contains the idea but not the poetry of contrition. Indeed, throughout the First Quarto there is a dearth of poetic expression, but the theatrical "points" are invariably made. Hamlet's third soliloquy, for example, abrupt and turgid as it appears in the First Quarto, nevertheless makes, in half the space, the "points" of the Second Quarto: "What's Hecuba to him," "Am I a coward?" "About, my brain," "The play's the thing,"—but the early soliloquy lacks, as usual, the sequence and grace of its successor.

Only the first and fourth soliloquies of Hamlet approach the definitive utterance of the Second Quarto. Nevertheless, the garden metaphor, which lends poignancy to the first soliloquy (I, 2, 135-137) does not appear in the earlier text. The First Quarto version of the great soliloquy of the tragedy has an intrinsic as well as a comparative interest:

"To be, or not to be, I there's the point,  
 To Die, to sleepe, is that all? I all:  
 No, to sleepe, to dreame, I mary there is goes,  
 For in that dreame of death, when we awake,  
 And borne before an everlasting Judge,  
 From whence no passenger ever returned,  
 The undiscovered country, at whose sight  
 The happy smile, and the accursed damn'd,  
 But for this, the joyfull hope of this,  
 Whol'd beare the scornes and flattery of the world,  
 Scorned by the right rich, the rich cursed of the poore?  
 The widow being oppressed, the orphan wrong'd,  
 The taste of hunger, or a tirants raigne,  
 And thousand more calamities besides  
 To grunt and sweate under this weary life,  
 When that he may his full *Quietus* make,  
 With a bare bodkin, who would this indure,  
 But for a hope of something after death?  
 Which pusles the braine, and doth confound the sence,  
 Which makes us rather beare those evilsles we have,  
 Than flie to others that we know not of.  
 I, that, O this conscience makes cowards of us all" (pp. 25-26).

If one can view the speech detached from association with its final expression, he finds it a creation. Surely its elemental phrase and mood constitute more than a mere skeleton for the finished soliloquy. On the other hand, the Second Quarto version is no mere amplification: its subtle strokes show the hand of the consummate artist.

The replacing of the soliloquy in the Second Quarto, making it subsequent to the soliloquy determining on the play, has given rise to adverse comment. Hunter<sup>21</sup> thus states his objection to the final arrangement: "Such meditations as these are not such as were likely to arise in the mind of one who had just conceived a design by which he hoped to settle a doubt of a very serious kind, and who must have been full of curiosity about the issue of his plot. If his speech is to indicate deliberation concerning suicide, or is even allied to suicide, such deliberation is surely out of place when curiosity was awake and his mind deeply intent on something that he must do. To be sure, the hypothesis of Inconsistency will explain all; but then it will explain anything." Hunter's reasoning is logical, and evidently Shakespeare had the same idea when he blocked out the drama, but his revision in this respect, as in others, shows the keenest insight into dramaturgy. As to Hamlet's apparent inconsistency, that may be explained on the grounds of his moody temperament. At any rate, this point never troubles an audience, the final judge, as Shakespeare knew. His reason for altering the soliloquy was doubtless for the sake of dramatic contrast and cumulative interest. As Dr. Mott observes, we have in the Second Quarto "the structural device of presenting a series of strong incentives and vigorous resolves, each followed by an equally conspicuous inactivity."<sup>22</sup> The great soliloquy of the pieces is static, and accordingly it is placed shortly before the play-within-the-play, a dynamic crisis of the action. Shakespeare invariably keeps the moving plot in the background of his reflective passages. Thus here, in the Second Quarto, as we have been told in

<sup>21</sup> Furness Variorum Edition of *Hamlet*, Vol. I, p. 206.

<sup>22</sup> "The Position of the Soliloquy 'To be or not to be' in *Hamlet*," *Pub. of Mod. Lang. As. of America*, Vol. XIX, new series, Vol. XII, p. 31.

Hamlet's third soliloquy that he will try the conscience of the king with a play, and as we have seen the players and know that the preparations are going toward, Hamlet's pondering on suicide furnishes an added element of suspense, and it therefore actually augments the story interest. As the suicide soliloquy originally stood, the play-within-the-play was unknown, and the only interest was in the being or not being of a hero without purpose. Such a predicament might almost make a quietus of the supreme tragedy in the English language.

The Second Quarto not only transplants the most conspicuous soliloquy but it also adds two new ones—one an inconsequential link (IV, 6, 4-5) and the other the soliloquy of Hamlet in which, for the last time, he communes with his spirit, unbraiding his want of decision, moralizing thereon in memorable fashion, and concluding with a new determination to revenge. Deeply tinged with Hamlet's introspective melancholy, this soliloquy, like all the others of the second version, is both unified and progressive in thought and expression.

Let us briefly review the hypothetical development of the soliloquies of "Hamlet." If one may judge from the evidence of the First Quarto and "Der Bestrafte Brudermord," some of the important soliloquies had their origin in the lost Kydian piece. These Shakespeare seems to have retouched in his first version which is imperfectly preserved for us in the First Quarto, and he apparently lavished most care on the "to be or not to be." In revising the tragedy, the author seems to have paid especial attention to the soliloquies, speeches practically identical in the Second Quarto and the First Folio but differing widely from those of the First Quarto. He alters the position of his most prominent soliloquy, he adds one of a purely introspective nature, he elaborates the thought, refines the diction, transforms jargon into music and infuses into every monolog a commingling of poetry and feeling which the world has styled genius.

Critics have attempted to discover the source of the idea of the "to be or not to be" with imperfect success. The book with which Hamlet enters in the First Quarto has been identi-

fied as Cardanus' "Comforte" (1576), and it may have suggested, as Hunter<sup>23</sup> surmised, the linking of death with sleep and dreams; if so, the resemblances are so general that they are scarcely worth noting. With a greater degree of probability, Professor Cook ascribes the root idea of

"The undiscovered country from whose bourn  
No traveller returns"

to Job, ~~XL~~ 21.<sup>24</sup> X

As in the case of this Biblical allusion, literary sources, other than historical chronicles and old plays, occasionally appear pertinent. It does not seem unlikely that the burlesque apostrophes to the wall by Pyramus and Thisbe, in the play-within-the-play of "A Midsummer-Night's Dream" (V, 1, 171-182, 190-193), were suggested by Golding's translation of Ovid: "O thou envious wall (they sayd) why lettst thou lovers thus?"<sup>25</sup> So also the mock heroic suicide soliloquies of Pyramus and Thisbe (V, 1, 276-292, 296-311, 331-354) might easily have been inspired by the corresponding soliloquies in the pseudo-heroic style of Golding's Ovid (p. 275)—especially by the ranting of Pyramus, who concludes with the apostrophe, "Devour ye, O ye Lions, all that in this rock doe dwell."<sup>26</sup> The situations are identical, and there is even the accessory of moonlight, but, to be sure, the fun and the jingling verse are peculiarly Shakespearean.

There seems an equally tenuous connection between the soliloquies of "Troilus and Cressida" and the supposed sources. If Shakespeare used the numerous lengthy moralizings of the Chaucerean protagonists, his abridgment has obliterated the debt. Shakespeare's most notable soliloquies are the railings of Thersites. The self-characterization therein contained seems to have originated in Chapman's Homer (Bk. II, ll. 196 seq.), but the soliloquies are apparently Shakespeare's own.

<sup>23</sup> The passage may be found in the Furness Variorum Edition of *Hamlet*, Vol. I, p. 209.

<sup>24</sup> "The Influence of Biblical upon Modern English Literature," by Albert S. Cook, in *The Bible as Literature*, by R. G. Moulton and others, p. 368.

<sup>25</sup> Furness Variorum Edition of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, p. 273.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, V, 1, 296-297.

The only soliloquy in that portion of "Pericles" judged to be by Shakespeare (III, 1, 1-14) evidently gets its setting from Gower's "Appolonius the Prince of Tyr.:"

"The storme aros, the wyndes lowde  
They blewen many a dredfulle blaste,  
The walken was alle over caste.  
The darke nyht the sonne hath under,  
Ther was a grete tempeste of thonder . . .  
This yonge ladye wepte and cride,  
To whom no comfort myht availe:  
Of childe she began travaile,  
Wher she lay in a caban clos.  
Here wofull lorde fro hire aros."<sup>27</sup>

He arises and comes into the drama with a prayer to assuage the storm and his wife's suffering. It is possibly worthy of remark that the other basis of the drama, Laurence Twine's "Patterne of Painful Adventures," contains a number of soliloquies, in one of which Apollonius apostrophizes the "most false and untrustie sea."<sup>28</sup>

With more precision we may locate the starting-point of the most striking soliloquy in "Cymbeline," the long speech of Iachimo (II, 1, 11-51), which is, theatrically, one of the greatest moments of the play. In the second day of the ninth novel of the "Decameron," Ambruogivolo comes out of the chest and observes the paintings and hangings, "with all things else which were remarkable, which perfectly he committed to memory." Iachimo writes it all down, but inquires,

"Why should I write this down, that's riveted,  
Screwed to my memory?"

This is the nucleus, but into the situation Shakespeare has infused the elements of breathless suspense and sensuous poetry.

Most significant in our study of the sources of Shakespeare's soliloquies are those of his first tragic masterpiece, "Romeo and Juliet." Here for the first time they strike and maintain a level of high poetic seriousness. The last soliloquy by Richard the Third is of transcendent power in its bare depic-

<sup>27</sup> Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*, Vol. I, p. 283.

<sup>28</sup> U. s., p. 193.

tion of emotion, but many of his soliloquies are frankly expository. Behind the rapid action of "Romeo and Juliet," however, the soliloquies form a vibrant background of exalted passion. Is this conception of soliloquies as tense and lofty revelations of the inner tragedy, accompanying and illuminating the crises of the plot, original with Shakespeare? A perusal of Arthur Brooke's poem, "Romeus and Juliet," brings a convincing answer in the negative. Brooke has many a soliloquy in indirect discourse, and several in dramatic form, two of which are by Romeo and four by Juliet. Love is the theme, in manifold and various guises. Shakespeare gets the idea of the soliloquy as a facile means of revealing emotion from Brooke, but, as usual, he vitalizes and transfigures his borrowings. Only in two instances does he directly transcribe. In Romeo's death soliloquy, he takes the apostrophe to Tybalt (V, 3, 97-101). As Brooke phrases it,

" Ah cosin dere, Tybalt, where so thy restless sprite now be . . .  
What more amendes, or cruell worcke desyrest thou  
To see on me, then this which here is shewd forth to thee now?  
Who reft by force of armes from thee thy living breath,  
The same with his owne hand (thou seest) doth poyson himselfe  
to death."<sup>29</sup>

Again, in Juliet's potion soliloquy, Shakespeare follows the fears and imaginings of the Brooke heroine rather closely. A few parallel passages will illustrate the nature of the borrowings. The early Juliet, before taking the potion, thus gives utterance to her suspicions:

" What do I knowe (quod she) if that this powder shall  
Sooner or later than it should or els not work at all? "<sup>30</sup>

Compare Shakespeare:

" What if this mixture do not work at all? " (IV, 3, 21).

Her horror of the tomb is similarly expressed in the two versions.

" Or how shall I that alway have in so freshe ayre been bred,  
Endure the loathsome stinke of such an heaped store . . .  
Shall not the fryer and my Romeus, when they come,  
Fynd me (if I awake before) ystified in the tombe? "

<sup>29</sup> Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*, Vol. II, p. 78.

<sup>30</sup> U. s., p. 70.

Compare Shakespeare:

"Shall I not then be stifled in the vault,  
To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in,  
And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?" (ll. 33-35).

Again,

"Where all my auncesters doe rest, my kindreds common grave."

Compare:

"Where, for this many hundred years, the bones  
Of all my buried ancestors are pack'd" (ll. 40-41).

Forthwith Brooke's Juliet sees the "carkas of Tybalt," even as she beholds his ghost at the conclusion of the Shakespearean soliloquy. Doubtless there is a connection between the soliloquies of the two versions, and presumably the connection is direct, although other hypotheses are possible. Painter's translation of Boisteau's version of the story, in the "Palace of Pleasure" (1567), contains precisely the same soliloquies which Brooke's poem does, so similar that they read like close paraphrases.

Moreover, the evidence of the Dutch play "Romeo and Juliette" by Jacob Struijs, shown by Professor Fuller<sup>21</sup> to be an adaptation of a lost play used by Shakespeare as a source, indicates clearly that Shakespeare received several important suggestions from the soliloquies of the lost play. For example, "even in the sleeping-potion scene, where in general there is a close following of Boisteau, Juliette (of the Dutch piece) gives a supreme touch to the force of her love, when her imaginings become too dreadful, by calling upon the name of Romeo, even as in Shakespeare, and by drinking the potion to him."<sup>22</sup> Again, the theme of the soliloquy (III, 2, 1-31) "where Juliet is impatiently awaiting for night and for Romeo"<sup>23</sup> is due to the early play; and, further, the detail of Romeo's apostrophe to death (V, 3, 116, 117) may be attributed to the same source.<sup>24</sup>

It is clear, therefore, that when Shakespeare wrote, the solil-

<sup>21</sup> Harold de Wolf Fuller: "Romeo and Juliette," *Modern Philology*, Vol. IV, p. 75.

<sup>22</sup> U. s., p. 38.

<sup>23</sup> U. s., p. 40.



oquies of the play, the poem and the story were a firmly established tradition. Little credit is due Shakespeare for originating the soliloquies, but, inspiring them with his lyric genius, he thus re-created them.

It may not be amiss briefly to summarize Shakespeare's sources. The chronicles furnish some material, but never in the form of soliloquy. Plutarch, on one or two occasions, indicates a soliloquy as such, merely mentioning its position and character. Shakespeare develops these hints with notable results. Two classical dramas seem to have given him some ideas as to monologs, although the classical type he more honored in the breach than the observance. Possibly a dozen plays in all contributed to his use of the soliloquy, but only in two or three instances is the influence significant. Various other sources gave rise to Shakespearean soliloquies, but none are of far-reaching value, except in the case of "Romeo and Juliet." If our study of sources led to no other discovery than this, it would seem to justify itself, for here we have, thanks to the source, the highest conception of the soliloquy consistently maintained,—namely, the voicing in trance, reverie or anguish the surging passions and thoughts which vivify the action.

Having noted all the ascertainable sources which inspired Shakespeare's soliloquies, and having investigated their quantitative importance, let us turn our attention to a brief critical observation of their chronological development. Viewed in the large, the soliloquies naturally fall into chronological periods, each with certain dominant characteristics,—although, to be sure, such a classification cannot be absolute, since it has its exceptions.

The first group, from "The First Part of Henry the Sixth" to "The Comedy of Errors," uses the soliloquy as a device for telling the story. Often crudely narrative and histrionically grandiose, the soliloquy occasionally assumes extremely artificial variations, as in the case of the overheard series of "Love's Labour's Lost" (IV, 3, 1-126), although in "The Comedy of Errors," it is marked by brevity and is reduced to a mechanism. In "The First Part of Henry the Sixth," the

narrative takes the shape of exit speeches; in the second and third parts, villainous plottings are made prominent; while in "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," the narrative assumes the genial guise of the story-telling of Launce.

With the second group, passion enters. From "King John," to "Romeo and Juliet," a ruling passion is manifest in the soliloquies. There is a single exception, "The Merchant of Venice," which is so crowded with incident that no room is left for solitary revery. The soliloquies of the first group are scattered promiscuously among various characters, while those of the second show a tendency toward concentration in the protagonist. The figure of the Bastard towers in "King John," owing, in no small degree, to the vigorous irony of his soliloquies. Of "Richard the Third," Professor Schelling pertinently remarks that one of its likenesses to Marlowe's work is the recurrence of the soliloquies of Richard.<sup>34</sup> With Marlowean abandon, Richard's diabolical ambition dominates the piece from initial exposition to catastrophe, expressing itself in no less than nine soliloquies. "Richard the Second" follows another Marlowean pattern. He is the passive, not the active agent, and he has only one soliloquy, but that the only one of importance in the drama. The domineering note returns in "The Taming of the Shrew," where the conspicuous soliloquies are by the comic villain-hero, Petruchio. His ruling passion is quite different from that centered in the soliloquies of Romeo and Juliet, even as theirs had been sketched, with cartoon exaggeration, in the mock soliloquies of Pyramus and Thisbe.

Next comes a little group, consisting of "Henry the Fourth," "Henry the Fifth" and "The Merry Wives," in which the comic monolog is exalted, Falstaff's soliloquies disclosing his embarrassments and his convictions with a fidelity truly ludicrous. Incidentally, the soliloquy as a rhetorical ornament is used with telling effect, most impressively in Henry's lyric outburst on sleep (Part II, III, 1, 4-31).

The fourth group extends from "Julius Caesar" to "Measure for Measure." A definite advance in the comprehension

<sup>34</sup> *The English Chronicle Play*, p. 93.

and technic of the soliloquy is felt, expressing itself in a new and more analytical interest in the psychology of the soliloquizer. Such are the brooding and moralizing of Brutus, the sardonic invective of Thersites, the subtle and involved analyses of the emotions by Helena and the Countess,<sup>35</sup> and even the self-knowledge of Parolles (IV, 4, 366-376). Perhaps most conspicuously is the moralizing element revealed in the soliloquies of Angelo.<sup>36</sup> Villain though he is, his meditations are far from the spirit of the straightforward plottings of Gloucester, Edmund and Iago. His villainy is made possible by his giving utterance to his conscience as well as to his passions. Nor is the self analysis confined to the soliloquies serious in purpose. To be sure, "As You Like It" is practically without soliloquy, doubtless owing to the fact that the action is leisurely and the dialog often reflective, so that the introduction of a long monolog might destroy the charming atmosphere of the piece by producing an effect of stagnation. The masterly psychological studies in soliloquy of Benedick and Malvolio, however, fall into line with those of Brutus, Angelo and the rest. The analytical method is the same, but the angle of disclosure is shifted, so that, in the case of "Much Ado" and "Twelfth Night," the very seriousness of the soliloquizers produces laughter. Both the comic and the tragic soliloquies of this period have a curiously paradoxical relation of attachment and detachment to the main theme. They are linked with the plot and yet they could easily be dropped from the action. Bearing on the story, they nevertheless usually have the unity of an isolated monolog, whether it is a funny situation, a bit of moralizing, or a little poem for recitation. Perhaps the best illustration is the rimed didacticism with which the Duke concludes the third act of "Measure for Measure." It is more vitally connected with the plot than the ornamental soliloquies of the previous group, and yet it is far from the searching introspection of the following period.

Indeed the distinctive soliloquies of the next group, which extends, we may say, from "Hamlet" to "Timon of Athens,"

<sup>35</sup> *All's Well*, I, 1, 231-244; I, 3, 134-141.

<sup>36</sup> *Measure for Measure*, II, 2, 162-187; II, 4, 1-17; IV, 4, 21-37.

do not differ from their predecessors in kind but rather in degree. Introspection and conscience are the dominant qualities of the great soliloquies of this great period. Both elements have their precursors; Brutus is introspective, but his thought takes the form of generalizations, while the soliloquies of Hamlet pulse with the very anguish of his spirit. Angelo's conscience is revealed, but in a sort of dilettant fashion—a slight pain, as it were, which disturbs his pleasure. The conscience of Macbeth is a disease which eats into his soul. Introspection becomes wormwood in the misanthropic meditations of Timon, tinged with the mannerism of classical precedent. Indeed the thought element of this group is strained to the breaking point. Hamlet's broodings are close to the verge of insanity, as commentators and physicians have testified, while Lear's ravings break the bonds. Now it is not to be supposed that Shakespeare arrived at a definite and inflexible conception of the soliloquy as a convention, even when he was writing the greatest soliloquies ever penned. His understanding of the possibilities of the soliloquy had arrived gradually, as we have seen, but its ultimate expression was doubtless intuitive rather than conscious. His was an age of creation, not criticism, and it remained for subsequent centuries to interpret the soliloquy and to prescribe rules for it. Consequently it need not surprise us that, alongside of the inner struggle of Hamlet, the soul cry of Othello, and Macbeth's consciousness of moral decay, we have the frankly narrative monologs of the villains Iago and Edmund. However, even in the simple expositions of their villainy, superbly independent of plausibility, there are noticeable the intellectual traits which dominate this group of soliloquies.

The soliloquies of the last group are miscellaneous in content and purpose. Perhaps they may be best designated quantitatively, but with a conspicuous exception. There is a general dwindling of the soliloquy, if not in actual number of lines, at least in importance and emphasis. The use of the soliloquy in "Pericles" and "Antony and Cleopatra" is facile, but not notable. Except for a bit of philosophizing, "Coriolanus" is without soliloquy. Then comes the exception, "Cymbeline,"

which contains more soliloquies, both in number and quantity, than any other Shakespearean piece. What is the explanation?

The reason lies in the new type of piece which Shakespeare here inaugurates. As Professor Thorndike points out, Shakespeare is making a radical departure into the realm of "dramatic romance," with which he closes his career.<sup>37</sup> The species is very artificial, and quite independent of naturalistic effect. It consists of a series of episodes and adventures, with interspersed monologs which fill the gaps of the story and explain the passions of the characters. "Philaster," the model which it seems quite possible "Cymbeline" imitated,<sup>38</sup> contains a large number of soliloquies, and it is interesting to note that in method as well as quantity, there is a similarity in the soliloquies of the two pieces. Both use the soliloquy to show a character going to sleep, both evince deft artistry in manipulating the soliloquy as a structural link, and throughout, both exalt the soliloquy as a revelation of passion. Shakespeare goes his contemporaries a step better in utilizing the soliloquy for emotional effect, and indeed he out-Herods Herod in profusion and variety of soliloquies. There are expositions of situation and character, villainous plottings, explanations of disguise, apostrophes, ragings and lamentations.

"Winter's Tale," though similar in structure to "Cymbeline," is very dissimilar in the use of soliloquies. Here the author seems to be reverting to the tendency toward condensation typical of the last period. His source, the tale of "Pandosto," contains a number of long and conventional meditations and laments,<sup>39</sup> but he carefully eschews them. The soliloquies of "Winter's Tale" are not notable, and not even noticeable, if we except the comic monologs of Autolycus. Likewise, the only conspicuous quality of the few soliloquies of "The Tempest" is their broad humor. "Henry the Eighth" is also practically without soliloquy, except the two farewells which Wolsey makes to his greatness (III, 2, 203-

<sup>37</sup> See *The Influence of Beaumont and Fletcher on Shakespeare*, Chapter VIII.

<sup>38</sup> U. s., pp. 157-160.

<sup>39</sup> For example, Collier's *Shakespeare's Library*, Vol. I, pp. 34, 51, 53.

227, 350-372). According to the latest critical opinion,<sup>40</sup> the probabilities are that not a word of soliloquy in the drama was written by Shakespeare, but whether by Shakespeare, Fletcher or another, the final farewell is justly famous for its majestic utterance and its touching sincerity.

Thus we have traced the growth of Shakespeare's soliloquies in six periods, the prominent characteristics of which may be briefly suggested, although only partially indicated, by six words: *narration, passion, comedy, morality, introspection* and *disappearance*. From crudity to perfection and thence to nothingness is the history of the technic. Variety is the striking characteristic. The master workman learns the tricks from the contemporary playwrights and from his sources. He does not create new forms of the soliloquy: the address to the audience and the comic monolog, the prayer and the moralizing were as old as the beginnings of drama; the love lament and the tragic revery flourished on the continent and in the England of his youth. All these he uses. No paltry credit of innovation is due Shakespeare, but transfiguration was his achievement. Despite the stage limitations of his day, Shakespeare succeeded in revealing the human mind in comic and tragic isolation, as no one else has ever done. Such is the testimony of the immortal soliloquies of Falstaff and Benedick, Romeo and Juliet, Brutus, Hamlet and Macbeth.

<sup>40</sup> See W. A. Neilson's Cambridge Edition of Shakespeare, p. 771.

## CHAPTER III

### THE SHAKESPEAREAN SOLILOQUY A MEANS OF EXPOSITION

From its inception to its disappearance, the soliloquy has been an important factor in the structure of the drama. The term "structure" excludes rhetorical ornaments, the narratives of the buffoon, comical and tragic musings and philosophizings, as well as outbursts of grief, rage, jealousy and other passions, when such monologs exist for their own sake. Our present consideration is the less conspicuous soliloquy, which, up to the middle of the nineteenth century, has been freely employed to tell the story in action.

Shakespeare invents no devices for this purpose. His usage, however, is so comprehensive that it includes nearly every technical contrivance which precedes him, and, at the same time, it is so definitive that it becomes the model for his successors. Let us, then, study the structural aspect of the Shakespearean soliloquy, the manifestation and culmination of the theatrical custom of ages, first as a means of exposition, and second as an accompaniment of the action. The expository soliloquy may be subdivided according to the following classification: (1) initial exposition, (2) identification, (3) disguising, (4) characterization, (5) villainy, and (6) narration.

#### INITIAL EXPOSITION

The playwright has a story to tell, many of the details of which it is difficult to adapt to conversation. The audience must have the information in order to understand the plot, the character or the situation. To-day the result is brought about, as realistically as possible, in dialog. Ibsen, on occasion, has made a virtue of necessity, divulging the story, bit by bit, throughout the production: witness the cumulative horror of the revelations of "Ghosts." In the primitive drama, however, monolog is often the simplest and easiest method of exposition, and the speech of the character which informs the

audience of the facts they ought to know we designate as the "exposition monolog," borrowing the word from German criticism.<sup>1</sup>

Naturally the exposition monolog frequently opens the drama, for the purpose of imparting data preliminary to the action and necessary for a comprehension of the plot. Hence, the presentation speech of the manager in the Hindu drama,<sup>2</sup> and the equally objective and specific exposition in the prolog of Roman comedy.<sup>3</sup> But speeches of prolog and presenter are not spoken by members of the *dramatis personae*, and therefore they are in no sense soliloquies. Initial exposition monologs by characters in the play do occur, however, in early dramas of India, China, Greece and Rome. "The Toy-Cart," thought to be the earliest of the extant Hindu dramas, and the "Ratnávalí" both begin with imposing exposition monologs.<sup>4</sup> So does the "Eumenides" of Aeschylus, when the Pythoness follows her invocation with an introductory narrative. This is the only case of the initial exposition monolog in Aeschylus, and Sophocles has none at all, but in Euripides the device is so frequent that it practically constitutes a law of composition. It opens thirteen of his tragedies,<sup>5</sup> and four of the speeches are assigned to the protagonist,<sup>6</sup> a beginning used with telling effect by Marlowe and Shakespeare. Several times Aristophanes employs the monologic opening,<sup>7</sup>—once, when Praxagora of the "Ecclesiazusae" hangs up a lamp and proceeds to apostrophize it, in clever burlesque of the initial exposition of the Euripidean heroine.

"It was not till the time of Plautus and Terence that the

<sup>1</sup> See "Der Shakespearesche Monolog und seine Spielweise," by Eugen Kilian, *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, Vol. XXXIX, p. xvii.

<sup>2</sup> For example, *Select Specimens of the Theater of the Hindus*, translated by H. H. Wilson, Vol. I, pp. 14-17.

<sup>3</sup> For example, the *Captivi* of Plautus.

<sup>4</sup> *Select Specimens of the Theater of the Hindus*, Vol. I, p. 20; Vol. II, p. 267.

<sup>5</sup> *Medea, Alcestis, Suppliants, Heracleidae, Trojan Women, Ion, Helena, Andromache, Electra, Orestes, Iphigenia among the Tauri, Cyclops, Phoenician Women.*

<sup>6</sup> Helen, Andromache, Iphigenia and Jocasta in *Phoenician Women*.

<sup>7</sup> *The Acharnians, The Clouds, Lysistrata, and The Ecclesiazusae.*



Prolog was formally divorced from the body of the drama, and that an independent address of the poet to the audience preceded the action of the play itself,"<sup>8</sup> The prolog does not supplant the initial exposition soliloquy, however; instead, both are used in the "Trinummus," "Bacchides," "Menaechmi," "Captivi," "Amphitryon," "Mercator" and "Truculentus" of Plautus, and the "Adelphi" of Terence. Terence's "Phormio" opens with Davus, a second prolog, as it were, since he is a protactic character, making his appearance only for the purpose of giving the initial exposition.

Seneca, like his master Euripides, is fond of the opening monolog. Sometimes the opening is prologic in nature, but in several instances it is closely akin to the expository soliloquy, notwithstanding the presence of another character. "Hercules Oetaeus"<sup>9</sup> begins with a long speech by the protagonist which invokes the "Sator Deorum" and concludes with five lines addressed to his companion Lichas. Octavia, weary of existence, bewails her misery at the opening of the tragedy bearing her name, and, but for the fact that the nurse replies, this would be a soliloquy of Elizabethan stamp. Likewise the opening lament of Oedipus is virtually a soliloquy, although Jocasta stands by and, after his speech, chides him for his complaints. The Senecan "Medea" seems an improvement over the Euripidean, in respect to the introductory soliloquy, which Seneca assigns to the protagonist. Her prayer to the gods for vengeance is moving in its passion and artistic in its subtle revelation of the story.

It is Seneca's "Tenne Tragedies" (1559-1581) which transmit from Greece to England the tradition of the initial exposition soliloquy, while the device as introductory to the comic plot is carried to England in adaptations and translations of Plautus and Terence in the early sixteenth century; but, independent of classical influence, the initial exposition monolog appears in the English miracle play. The York, Chester,

<sup>8</sup> *A Study of the Prolog and Epilog in English Literature from Shakespeare to Dryden*, by G. S. B., p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> This and the rest of the *Tenne Tragedies* are Senecan for our purposes, as we adopt the Elizabethan point of view: see *The Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Tragedy*, by J. W. Cunliffe, p. 13.

Coventry and Towneley cycles all open with speeches by Deus, in which he tells who he is, and briefly gives the Biblical setting.<sup>10</sup> The method is crude but straightforward. A favorite guise of the initial exposition monolog in the Coventry cycle—and in the Greek and Indian drama, for that matter—is the prayer. Sometimes a series of prayers opens a piece. The lamentation, another form with Greek and Indian predecessors, occasionally tells the preliminary story of the miracle. In the Coventry play of "Christ appearing to Mary,"<sup>11</sup> there is an effective opening monolog in which Mary Magdalene mourns at the tomb. The lament sometimes attains extraordinary length. In one of the York plays, Joseph, supposed to be wandering in the wilderness, has a complaint seventy-four lines long, and in another Thomas bewails his fate for one hundred and four lines.<sup>12</sup>

The monologic opening is more frequent in the morality than in the miracle, but invariably it is so didactic in tone that it can scarcely be termed expository. It is usually in the form of a little sermon, preached directly to the auditors, as, for example, the introductory discourses of Mercy in "Mankind," who exhorts "ye soverans that sytt, and ye brothern that stonde ryghte uppe."<sup>13</sup>

Early English drama affords numerous illustrations of the initial exposition soliloquy both in tragedy and comedy. As an instance of each may be cited the love lament of Gismond opening "Gismond of Salerne" (1568) and the genial information imparted by Mathew Merygreeke at the beginning of "Roister Doister" (1552 c.). In length of discourse and facility of expression, both indicate classical inheritance. The "Klagenmonolog" of Gismond Professor Brandl compares with that of Seneca's "Phaedra,"<sup>14</sup> and Professor Cunliffe

<sup>10</sup> *York Plays*, edited by L. T. Smith, p. 1; *Towneley Plays*, re-edited by Geo. England and A. W. Pollard, Early English Text Society, Extra Series LXXI, p. 1; *Ludus Coventriae*, edited by J. O. Halliwell, London Shakespeare Society, Vol. IV, p. 19; *Chester Plays*, same editor and publication, Vol. XVII, p. 8.

<sup>11</sup> *Ludus Coventriae*, p. 360.

<sup>12</sup> *York Plays*, pp. 102, 480.

<sup>13</sup> *Manly*, Vol. I, p. 315.

<sup>14</sup> *Quellen des Weltlichen Dramas in England vor Shakespeare*, p. C.

points out the similarity between this soliloquy and a parallel lament in Dolce's "Dido" (V, 1, 37-43).<sup>15</sup> In the case of Merygreeke's speech, although it bears a general resemblance to the initial exposition of Roman comedy, the fact must not be overlooked that the device occurs in comedies apparently independent of the classics,—in the plays of John Heywood, for example.

Shakespeare's immediate predecessors use opening monologs sparingly. Lyly, Greene and Kyd have practically none, but Marlowe's "Doctor Faustus," "Jew of Malta," and "Edward the Second" begin with notable soliloquies. While the speech of Faustus is a graphic depiction of the meditations of "the studious artisan," Gaveston's monolog is frankly expository, and that of Barabas is subtly so. Discovered counting his gold and rhapsodizing over the gems of India, the very picture of the soliloquizer is exposition in itself, but deftly inlaid in the resplendent verse is the significant statement of the fact that the ships are arriving safe.

It is quite possible that the vivid speeches of the protagonists Barabas and Faustus suggested the daring opening of "Richard the Third." This is the only occurrence of the initial exposition in Shakespeare, but it seems to epitomize the type.

Gloucester combines the direct assertion of the Satan of the miracle play<sup>16</sup> with imagery as comprehensive as that of the classics:

"Now is the winter of our discontent  
Made glorious summer by this sun of York."

The soliloquy is remarkable for its easy transition from the general to the specific. It treats three themes: first, the peaceful state of the realm; second, the speaker's deformity; and third, his villainy. His villainy directs itself against Clarence who thereupon makes his appearance. This is at once an introduction to the immediate situation and a key to the entire action; the background of the tragedy is given, together with

<sup>15</sup> "Gismond of Salerne," *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, June, 1906, p. 443.

<sup>16</sup> *York Plays*, edited by L. T. Smith, p. 22; see *ante*, p. 8.

a description of the physical, mental and moral characteristics of its leading figure and a declaration of his purposes. The impracticability of the contrivance is evident when one considers that an audience does not become quiet during the first speech of a play, and accordingly, in this case, it would miss a vital explanation. Perhaps this is the reason that Shakespeare does not repeat the experiment. Undoubtedly it is the cause of the modern rearrangements of the opening, the soliloquy being placed after matter less significant.

The disadvantage of the position of the initial exposition monolog has not prevented great dramatists from using it on occasion. Lope de Vega begins "*El Major Alcalde el Rey*" with a long and imposing soliloquy in which Sancho declares his love in ravishing terms. Molière uses the device nine times, conspicuously in "*Le Malade Imaginaire*," where Argan is discovered sitting at a table, computing his apothecary's bill. Chettle, Yarrington, Tourneur, Jonson, Dekker, Middleton and many others of Shakespeare's contemporaries avail themselves of the initial exposition monolog, but only once do Beaumont and Fletcher employ it. In "*The Knight of Malta*," Mountferrat indulges in a lover's lament, which includes a grandiose description of his prowess and a declaration of his hatred. Dryden, too, abandons this method of exposition, with a single exception, the soliloquy of Cleomenes. Indeed, aside from a number of classical or Elizabethan imitations, the form falls into disuse soon after Shakespeare. In the early nineteenth century, there are a few inconsequential revivals—the opening of B. W. Procter's "*Mirandola*," for example. The philosophical meditations with which Goethe's *Faust* begins the drama fall in line with those of Marlowe's *Faustus*, but they are not primarily expository. Again, the opening of Byron's "*Manfred*" is reminiscent of Goethe's "*Faust*," and it contains a hint of narration.

These instances illustrate the fact that the initial exposition soliloquy has proved especially alluring to the closet dramatist. Samuel Daniel devotes the entire first act of his "*Cleopatra*" (pr. 1594) to the impressively phrased lamentation of the protagonist. Many of the nineteenth century poets have used the

contrivance: Byron, Beddoes, Coleridge, and Miss Mitford, Shelley in his "Prometheus Unbound," Browning in "Pippa Passes" and Maeterlinck in "Alladine and Palomedes." Dispensing with introductory props, the form is a picturesque challenge to the imagination. That is one charm of Gloucester's soliloquy.

#### IDENTIFICATION

One function of practically all of the initial exposition soliloquies, and of many others besides, is that of identification. Gloucester does not state his name, but he carefully analyzes his personality. The villain Edmund of "Lear" devotes nearly all of his first soliloquy to the establishing of his identity and proclaims himself "the bastard Edmund" (I, 2, 17). Belarius, in his crudely expository monolog in "Cymbeline" is even more specific: "Myself, Belarius, that am Morgan called" (III, 3, 106). Likewise, Autolycus: "My father named me Autolycus, who being, as I am, littered under Mercury, was likewise a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles" ("Winter's Tale," IV, 3, 25-27).

The comical announcement of the speaker's name is as old as Plautus. In "Stichus," Gelasimus informs the audience that 'when little, his father gave him his name, because, even from a tiny child, he was a droll chap' (II, 1).<sup>17</sup> The English Vice sometimes interprets his name in classical fashion,—so Ambidexter in "Cambises":

"My name is Ambidexter: I signifie one  
That with both hands finely can play."<sup>18</sup>

The methods of establishing the identity of the monologist in early English drama are delightfully naïve. The York, Chester, Coventry and Towneley cycles begin with the simple statement: "Deus sum." In the play of "The Prophets," each prophet announces himself thus: "I am the prophete called Isaye," "I am David," "I Jonas," and so on.<sup>19</sup> In the same

<sup>17</sup> Cf. the openings of the *Menaechmi* and the *Captivi*.

<sup>18</sup> Manly, Vol. II, p. 168.

<sup>19</sup> *Ludus Coventriae*, p. 65.

manner, the characters of the St. George plays declare their names.<sup>20</sup>

The monologs of all the moralities, early and late, are largely descriptive of the speakers and abound with self-identifications. Avarice in "Respublica" (1553 c.) preludes the information as to his identity in this wise:

"But now what my name is, and what my purpose—  
Taking you all for friends—I fear not to disclose."<sup>21</sup>

The palmer in John Heywood's "merry interlude of the foure PP" frankly presents himself: "I am a palmer, as ye se."<sup>22</sup> Bishop Bale, who, like Heywood, often uses monologic self-identification, furnishes a rather amusing instance in his "King Johan:"

"To shew what I am I thynke yt conveyent:  
Johan, Kyng of Ynglond, the cronyclys doth me call."<sup>23</sup>

In later plays the self-identification is not so apparent, but it persists as long as the initial exposition soliloquy.

Indentification of characters other than the speaker is sometimes accomplished in monolog. At the opening of Tourneur's "Revenger's Tragedy" (pr. 1607), Vindici identifies the members of the ducal train as they pass by. A primitive example of the same contrivance is the prolog of the "Captivi" of Plautus, where the monologist, without any attempt at artifice, points out the characters to the spectators. This theatrical device, however, is only remotely allied with the soliloquy, but a favorite conclusion of the soliloquy serves to identify others, —namely, the prepared entrance.

Although not peculiar to the soliloquy, the prepared entrance occurs more frequently there than in dialog. In Indian, Greek and Roman dramas, as well as those of modern nations, there are many examples of the soliloquizer's concluding with the remark that So-and-so is approaching, an easy way of acquainting the spectator with the new arrival. Since there is

<sup>20</sup> Manly, Vol. I, pp. 289-290, 293.

<sup>21</sup> *Lost Tudor Plays*, p. 182.

<sup>22</sup> Manly, Vol. I, p. 484.

<sup>23</sup> Manly, Vol. I, p. 526.

nothing intricate about the device, and no variety in its manipulation, a few illustrations from Shakespeare will suffice to show its stereotyped character:

- "See, here he comes" ("Comedy of Errors," II, 2, 6).
- "Here Clarence comes" ("Richard III," I, 1, 41).
- "Here comes my messenger" ("A Midsummer-Night's Dream," III, 2, 4).
- "But who comes here?" ("Taming of the Shrew," II, 1, 38).
- "But here she comes" ("Taming of the Shrew," II, 1, 182).
- "O here comes my nurse" ("Romeo and Juliet," III, 2, 31).
- "O here he comes" ("Merry Wives," III, 5, 60).
- "But here the lady comes" ("Twelfth Night," IV, 3, 21).
- "But here they come" ("Othello," II, 3, 63).
- "Look where she comes" ("Othello," III, 3, 277).
- "Look where he comes" ("Othello," III, 3, 330).
- "But who comes here?" ("Lear," IV, 1, 9).
- "Hush! here comes the lords of Tyre" ("Pericles," I, 3, 9).
- "Here come moe voices" ("Coriolanus," II, 3, 132).
- "Lo, here she comes" ("Cymbeline," III, 3, 22).

Those who are wont to regard Shakespeare as never repeating himself may well consider the above list of soliloquy endings. Moreover, none of these formulas are original: countless examples of the same words may be found in his predecessors. Yet so simple is the phrase, "Here he comes," with its slight variations, that it is quite inconspicuous and far from monotonous as the great poet uses it. On occasion, he gives the formula a humorous turn. Antipholus of Ephesus announces the approach of his Dromio with the observation, "Here comes the almanac of my true date" ("Comedy of Errors," II, 1, 41). Edmund breaks off his ruminations on astrology with: "Edgar—(Enter Edgar) and pat he comes like the catastrophe of the old comedy" ("Lear," I, 2, 145). Even more abruptly are Timon's misanthropic musings interrupted by the appearance of Apemantus. "More man?" mutters Timon. "Plague, plague!" (IV, 3, 197). As in this case, the prepared entrance may merely call attention to the new arrival, although it usually states his name. There is no equivocation in the self-identification of a soliloquizer, however: he informs the audience who he is.

## DISGUIISING

The soliloquizer who explains his disguise performs the same function. The spectators must thoroughly understand who the disguised one is, and accordingly a monolog is often introduced to reveal the facts. Almost everywhere that disguisings occur, there may be found explanatory soliloquies. Comedy is especially rich in them. Aristophanes uses the device when Bleepyrus mentions in monolog that he has on his wife's kerchief and her Persian slippers.<sup>24</sup> Jupiter in the "Amphytrion" of Plautus (III, 1) carefully instructs the audience as to his metamorphosis, while Pleusides of the "Miles Gloriosus" (IV, 7) explains that his disguise is for the sake of love, a motive often employed in Elizabethan drama.

The romantic and comic plays of Shakespeare's predecessors occasionally contain soliloquies explanatory of disguise. Whetstone's "Promos and Cassandra" (pr. 1578) has two,<sup>25</sup> and Lyly's "Gallathea"<sup>26</sup> a like number. "Mucedorus" (pr. 1598) has a scene in which the hero, while soliloquizing, puts on his disguise in full view of the spectators;<sup>27</sup> and Gloucester in "Look About You" (pr. 1600) adjusts a false beard, as he announces, "From pursuivant I'll turn a hermit now."<sup>28</sup> Since this piece abounds in disguisings, there are a number of soliloquies to explain them. The examples might be extended, were there any distinguishing features worthy of note. In general, it may be remarked that the assertion of disguise is usually less ostentatiously effected than that of identity, as indicated by Shakespeare's usage.

He employs the soliloquy several times for the sake of explaining the disguise. In "The Third Part of Henry the Sixth," King Henry makes a point, not of his evident disguise, but of his real identity. "No, Harry, Harry, 'tis no land of thine," he laments (III, 1, 15), and the Keeper who overhears him divines that "this is the quondam king" (III,

<sup>24</sup> *Comedies*, translated by Wm. J. Hickie, Vol. II, p. 633.

<sup>25</sup> *Six Old Plays*, Vol. I, pp. 39, 98.

<sup>26</sup> *Works*, edited by R. W. Bond, Vol. II, pp. 439, 441.

<sup>27</sup> Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, Vol. VII, p. 240.

<sup>28</sup> Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, Vol. VII, p. 466.



1, 23). Kent, in "Lear" (I, 4, 1-7) refers to his disguising as having 'razed his likeness,' but he, too, emphasizes his identity, aspostrophizing himself as "banish'd Kent."

Shakespeare has a trick of preparing his audience for a disguise before it occurs. Ford of the "Merry Wives" announces, "I have a disguise to sound Falstaff" (II, 1, 245). In "Lear," Edgar, not content with the statement that he purposes to change his appearance, proceeds to describe his "make-up":

"My face I'll grime with filth,  
Blanket my loins, elf all my hairs in knots,  
And with presented nakedness out-face  
The winds and persecutions of the sky" (II, 3, 9-12).

Further, he transforms his voice, showing how it will sound in the new rôle. "Poor Turlygod! poor Tom!" he cries. After this elaborate explanation, the audience must surely remember his concluding remark, "Edgar I nothing am." The soliloquy is not idle chatter, for the next time Edgar enters, it is in the character of "poor Tom," and, were it not for this vivid prolog, the spectators would be at a loss to understand the scene.

Equally important for the plot of "Cymbeline" is Cloten's explanation of his disguise (IV, 1). His iteration of the fact that he is wearing the garments of Posthumous assumes significance when Imogen weeps over his beheaded trunk. Her lament, attuned to romance rather than tragedy, is an appeal to pity rather than terror, and it is necessary, for the desired effect, that no doubt be left as to the actual identity of the corpse she bewails; hence the preliminary information. Imogen's soliloquy explaining her own disguise, "I see a man's life is a tedious one" (III, 6, 1), is in a serio-comic vein, a tone assumed by other heroines when explaining their masculine attire. Such are the soliloquies of Aspatia in "The Maid's Tragedy" of Beaumont and Fletcher (V, 4) and of Florimel in Dryden's "Secret Love" (V, 1). Beaumont and Fletcher frequently employ the device,—once in the soliloquy of a man disguised as a maid ("Monsieur Thomas," IV, 8), again of a servant in his master's clothes ("Women Pleased," I, 3), again of a gentleman disguised as a rustic ("Women

Pleased," IV, 1), and so on. The vogue of this type of soliloquy seems to have diminished with the waning of the dramatic romance.

#### CHARACTERIZATION

It is only a step from disguise to characterization: in one case the soliloquizer tells who he is supposed to be, and in the other he discloses his real personality. Naturally, the revelation of character is of much greater importance, and indeed, if interpreted in the large, it constitutes one of the most vital functions of the soliloquy. All notable soliloquies indicate something of the speaker's nature. Often the portrayal is keenly introspective, but neither the subtly psychological analysis nor the unobtrusively incidental revelation concern the present inquiry into the exposition monolog. The self-characterizing soliloquizer, on occasion, gives a frank and, as it were, impersonal account of his character.

Excluding, for the moment, the villain's soliloquy, there is only one flagrant case of the self-characterizing monolog in Shakespeare, that of Prince Hal ("Henry IV," Part I, 1, 2, 219-240). This much discussed speech exists for the sake of exposition. The Prince's true worth and his ultimate respectability must be understood at the start. He alone knows of his intention to 'throw off this loose behavior,' and consequently he divulges the secret. Making allowances for the free use of the expository monolog in Elizabethan days, the modern critic is nevertheless inclined to consider this instance unjustified. The prince is not speaking as a choral interlude, but as himself, and accordingly his character suffers from his coldly impersonal cognizance of his present delinquencies and his egoistic purpose to use them as a background for future glorification. "Surely this is a great mistake of Shakespeare's," says Professor Dowden; "surely in so far as the prince did act from this motive, he was a charlatan and a snob."<sup>29</sup>

Self-characterization has usually been effected in comic rather than serious monolog. The parasite of Roman comedy is addicted to this manner of presenting himself,—at the open-

<sup>29</sup> *The Mind and Art of Shakespeare*, p. 211.

ing of the "Captivi" of Plautus, for example. So the English clown throughout his career, including his appearance in Shakespeare,<sup>80</sup> is wont to talk about himself. The serious aspect of the monolog develops in the moralities, which abound in long discourses on the virtues or vices represented, as John Skelton's "Magnificence"<sup>81</sup> affords ample illustration. After the advent of classical and continental influences on the drama, the self-characterization becomes more subtle and less direct. Occasional instances of the old type may be found, however, even in modern times. Victor Hugo makes a startling use of it in "Hernani" (1830), when Don Carlos (IV, 2) reveals a complete change of character.

To be sure, characterization of people other than the speaker has often been accomplished in soliloquy. There are some notable examples in Shakespeare. Viola's charming comment on the Clown in "Twelfth Night" (III, 1, 67-75) is delicately penetrative; and, in an entirely different vein, Lady Macbeth's analysis of her husband's nature is keenly searching (I, 5, 16-26). Whether or not Macbeth possesses "the milk of human kindness,"<sup>82</sup> the whole tragedy proves her soliloquy a masterly delineation of his frailty. Shakespeare does not hesitate to show a soliloquizer duped in his estimate of character, however. Both Cassio and Othello commend Iago's honesty (III, 1, 43; III, 3, 258), but the dramatist is careful to precede their observations with Iago's own assertion of villainy. On the other hand, it is rather curious, but obviously expository, that the villains credit the objects of their hatred with their true merits. Thus the cruel Queen of "Cymbeline" admits Pisanio's constancy (I, 5, 75), the scoundrel Edmund acknowledges that he has a noble brother ("Lear," I, 2, 195), and Iago grants Othello "of a free and open nature" (I, 3, 405), and again "of a constant, loving, noble nature" (II, 1, 298).

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<sup>80</sup> See pp. 101-110 of this dissertation.

<sup>81</sup> *Poetical Works*, edited by Alexander Dyce, Vol. I, pp. 226, 247, 252, 257, 273.

<sup>82</sup> See W. W. Story's *Excursions in Art and Letters*, p. 225.

## VILLAINY

The most significant form of the self-characterizing soliloquy is that of the plotting villain—a device of ancient lineage. Sámsthánaka in "The Toy Cart" gloats and plots<sup>33</sup> in much the same fashion that Satan does in the miracles and moralities. We have already noted the Satanic soliloquy of the miracle as a prototype of Gloucester's machinations.<sup>34</sup> The moralities preserve the tradition. The gleeful monologs of Lucifer in "Wisdom Who is Christ"<sup>35</sup> reveal a certain dashing deviltry, while the devil of "Lusty Juventus" (1547-53 c.) not only plots but also discloses his hypocrisy.<sup>36</sup> Likewise in Skelton's "Magnificence," Cloaked Colusion candidly lays bare his hypocrisy in a soliloquy of eighty-six lines,<sup>37</sup> and Hypocrisy again reveals himself in a long monolog in "The Conflict of Conscience" by Nathaniel Woodes (pr. 1581).<sup>38</sup> The soliloquy of the villain reappears in "Nice Wanton," when Worldly Ambition, with the villain's stage laugh, exults over the downfall of the heroine.<sup>39</sup> Marston's Piero in "Antonio's Revenge" (pr. 1602) has the same diabolical laugh: "Antonio lives: umph: how long? ha, ha! how long?"<sup>40</sup>—a laugh reechoed by Eleazer in "Lust's Dominion" (pr. 1657),<sup>41</sup> and the villain Baradas of "Richelieu" (1839) is wont to accompany his gloatings with the same diabolical "Ha, ha!" It may be worthy of a passing note that the late Thomas Kean followed Gloucester's soliloquy, "Was ever woman in this humor woo'd" (I, 2, 228-264) with a peal of fiendish laughter.

X The majority of the villains preceding Gloucester are painfully explicit in their monologic revelations, but there are a few conspicuous exceptions, such as the stealthy Ateukin of

<sup>33</sup> *Select Specimens of the Theater of the Hindus*, pp. 143, 166.

<sup>34</sup> *Ante*, pp. 8, 51.

<sup>35</sup> *Digby Mysteries*, edited by F. J. Furnivall, pp. 150, 157.

<sup>36</sup> Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, Vol. II, pp. 62, 68.

<sup>37</sup> *Works*, edited by Dyce, Vol. I, p. 247.

<sup>38</sup> Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, Vol. VI, p. 45.

<sup>39</sup> *Manly*, Vol. I, p. 475.

<sup>40</sup> *Works*, edited by Bullen, II, 1, p. 123.

<sup>41</sup> Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, Vol. XIV, p. 120.

Greene's "James the Fourth" and Marlowe's "Jew," the crafty Barabas. Brand in "The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington" (1598) swears "by my villainy," as he calmly describes the poisoning he purposes,<sup>42</sup> and with commonplace directness the murderers of "Two Lamentable Tragedies" (pr. 1601) plan their crimes.<sup>43</sup>

Shakespeare does not hesitate at a frank avowal of villainy. Aaron in "Titus Andronicus" announces in monolog (II, 3, 1-9) that his gold "will beget a very excellent piece of villainy." "Why, I can smile and murder whiles I smile," declares Gloucester in "The Third Part of Henry the Sixth" (III, 2, 182). He determines on his ambition for the crown, satirically laments his deformity, admits his hypocrisy and plots the destruction of those in his path, boasting that he can "set the murderous Machiavel to school." The whole speech, seventy-two lines in length, is a majestic prelude to the soliloquies of "Richard the Third," the opening of which is even more explicit in self-characterization. Here Gloucester describes himself as "subtle, false and treacherous" and proclaims his determination "to prove a villain." Mr. Brandes relates that, when J. L. Heiberg refused to produce "Richard the Third" at the Royal Theater at Copenhagen, "he doubted, justly enough, the psychological possibility of this phrase."<sup>44</sup> Critics have often caviled at it, and justly, as Mr. Brandes says, from a psychological point of view. As a dramaturgic device, however, it is simple and effective. Only Gloucester knows of his villainy, and, accordingly, he reveals it at the outset in no unmistakable terms. Throughout the action, he keeps the audience informed as to his diabolical intentions.<sup>45</sup> A certain histrionic glamor is attained in the monolog in which gloating is substituted for plotting, the famous "Was ever woman in this humor woo'd?" (I, 2, 228-263). Again, with all the candor of Hypocrisy of the morality-play, Gloucester lays bare his double dealing:

<sup>42</sup> Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, Vol. VIII, p. 304.

<sup>43</sup> *Old English Plays*, edited by Bullen, Vol. IV, pp. 19, 24.

<sup>44</sup> *William Shakespeare*, p. 127.

<sup>45</sup> For example, I, 1, 145-162; IV, 2, 61-66; IV, 3, 37-43.

"And thus I clothe my naked villainy  
 With odd old ends stolen forth of holy writ,  
 And seem a saint, when most I play the devil" (I, 3, 336-8).

Iago is equally explicit but less ornate in his plottings. Except for the ornamental couplets with which they conclude, his first two soliloquies are purely expository, stating in so many words his hatred of the Moor, iterating the cause of this hatred,—to many critics an insufficient motive,—and selecting Cassio as the tool for wreaking vengeance (I, 3, 389-410; II, 1, 295-321). The next monolog is entirely expository, giving the situation in explanation of the ensuing scene (II, 3, 50-63). Iago's fourth soliloquy, "What's he then that says I play the villain?" (II, 3, 342-368), admits his own villainy and hatches more of it, with the audacity, if not the bravura, characteristic of Gloucester. Here, as in the case of Gloucester's determination to prove a villain, we must admit with Professor Campbell, that, "in making Iago characterize his reasons as 'divinity of hell,' perhaps the poet oversteps the limit of psychological truth."<sup>46</sup> Finally Iago attains poetic utterance (III, 3, 321-329). In his generalizations on jealousy, only one verse of exposition occurs, "I will in Cassio's lodging lose this napkin;" and his last bit of soliloquizing (IV, 1, 45-48) sounds a brief note of exultation.

Although the soliloquies of the instigator of the by-plot of "Lear" do not occupy the conspicuous position accorded those of Gloucester and Iago, Edmund's comments are also downright in their revelation of villainy,—especially in his first and last soliloquies, "Thou, Nature, art my goddess" (I, 2, 1-22), and "To both these sisters have I sworn my love" (V, 1, 55-69). Edmund, however, does not acknowledge his villainy as such. Equally complacent is the dastardly Cloten of "Cymbeline," whose nefarious plottings indicate his nature more plainly than self-assertion (III, 5, 132-150; IV, 1, 1-27). Such schemings for the lawless gratification of passion still persist in second rate melodrama. A striking soliloquy on this

<sup>46</sup> *Tragic Drama in Aeschylus, Sophocles and Shakespeare*, p. 239. See also the trenchant observations on this point by E. E. Stoll, "Anachronism in Shakespeare Criticism," *Modern Philology*, April, 1910, Vol. VII, p. 561.

theme occupies the greater part of the third act of "Antony" (1831), the best constructed play by the elder Dumas.

The Shakespearean villain is not always diabolically direct in self-assertion. Unlike Edmund and Cloten, Proteus ("Two Gentlemen," II, 6, 1-43) and Angelo ("Measure for Measure," II, 2, 162-187) both admit their evil intentions, but strive to excuse them in the name of love. The king in "Hamlet" reveals his pernicious purpose in ambiguously regal verbiage (IV, 4, 60-70). Macbeth's "To be thus is nothing" (III, 1, 48-72) indicates a psychological attitude which makes crime possible, but his wicked designs are so unobtrusively portrayed that they are scarcely related to the expository soliloquy. Once he states a definite purpose,—“I go and it is done;” (II, 1, 62) but, preceded by the vision of the dagger and accompanied by the tolling of the bell, the soliloquy bears little resemblance to the bald declarations of preceding murderers. Subsequently, however, visions and bell-tollings become conventionalized paraphernalia of soliloquies, especially in the terroristic plays of the romantic revival,—“The Castle Spectre” (1797) of M. G. Lewis, for example (IV, 2).

Lady Macbeth's great soliloquies are like those of her husband in that the phraseology is far removed from common speech. Her monologs at the opening of the fifth scene reveal her the she-villain in the “grand style.” The pseudo-masculine vigor of Lady Macbeth's assertions are not dissimilar to those of the soliloquizing Ragan in the old “Leir,” who affirms that it is an easy matter “to give a stab, or slit a paltry windpipe,” and who, contemptuous of man and yet longing to unsex herself, cries out, “O God, but I had been made a man!”<sup>47</sup> The Duchess of Gloucester in “The Second Part of Henry the Sixth” expresses the same feeling:

“Were I a man, a duke, and next of blood,  
I would remove these tedious stumbling blocks  
And smooth my way upon their headless necks” (I, 2, 63-65).

It is significant that Shakespeare does not follow the tradition of the soliloquizing she-villain in his “Lear,” and indeed,

<sup>47</sup> *Six Old Plays*, p. 454.

with the exception of this little speech by the Duchess and a somewhat similar one by Tamora in "Titus Andronicus" (II, 3, 188-191), Lady Macbeth is the only woman to give vent to villainous thoughts in Shakespeare's drama.

The plotting villain states his intention to act. This is a phase of the exposition monolog very frequently assigned to other characters. Hamlet resolves on the play (II, 2, 623-634), Cassius determines the means of seducing Brutus (I, 2, 312-326), Isabella plans to appeal to her brother to sacrifice himself (II, 4, 171-187),—these intentions and many more are set forth in soliloquy. The same device is occasionally used to dispose of a character: thus Pistol ("Henry the Fifth," V, 1, 85-94) and Parolles ("All's Well," IV, 3, 366-376) determine on their future careers.

#### NARRATION

The expository soliloquy has been used as long as the soliloquy has existed, not only for indicating events of the future, but also of the past and the present. The narrative of the past ~~appears in~~ classical and early English drama most often as the initial exposition monolog, but it becomes more frequent throughout the action, until, in Elizabethan days, it is the playwright's favorite method for obviating all difficulties of story-telling. Whenever anything is to be explained, a character steps forth with the information for the audience. 12

Shakespeare's narrative soliloquies are well nigh innumerable. The monologs of the three parts of "Henry the Sixth" are verbosely narrative, while those of "The Comedy of Errors" deftly exhibit facets of the main plot, after the manner of classical comedy, but with much greater condensation. The Courtezan's summary of events (IV, 3, 82-97), for example, is as crisply expository as any of the monologs of Plautus or Terence. The Elizabethan narrative soliloquy, like that of Plautus and Terence, often recounts dialog. A curious instance is afforded by Tyrrel's description of the killing of the princes in "Richard the Third," as told him by the two murderers (IV, 3, 1, 22). Instead of presenting their conversation, the playwright evidently thought it more effective to have it repeated by a third person.



Frequently it is necessary to show a character's understanding of a situation, and manifestly this is most expeditiously accomplished in soliloquy. Sebastian's astonished narrative ("Twelfth Night," IV, 3, 1-21) and Diana's clear comprehension of the intrigue of "All's Well" (IV, 2, 67-76) leave no doubt regarding their attitudes. [Perhaps the most unobtrusive exposition is attained in Hamlet's first soliloquy (I, 2, 129-159), which, though ostensibly a passionate outburst on the weariness of life, conveys indelibly the information that his mother, within a month after her good husband's funeral, has married his wicked brother. Usually such necessary information is bluntly obtruded.] So Timon's financial embarrassments are crudely set forth in two soliloquies (II, 1, 1-13; II, 2, 1-8), and his loss of friends is evidenced by another (III, 3, 36-40). Sometimes the entire plot is epitomized by a soliloquizer. Thus Viola reviews the love-chain of "Twelfth Night":

"My master loves her dearly;  
And I, poor monster, fond as much on him;  
And she, mistaken, seems to dote on me" (II, 2, 34-36).

Likewise, with a little more elaboration, the plight of Imogen is summarized ("Cymbeline," II, 1, 61-70). Such monologs are not inserted for the sake of telling the audience something new, but rather for gathering up the threads of the plot and emphasizing the main issue.

Shakespeare resorts to crass story-telling in the dramatic romances. The crudity of Belarius's account of his foster-sons is accentuated by the use of apostrophe. He follows an apostrophe to Cymbeline with the definite statement, "At three and two years old, I stole these babes" (III, 3, 101), and, a moment later, he calls upon his dead wife in order to impart the additional information, "Thou wast their nurse; they took thee for their mother." Equally patent is the vision which Antigonus of "The Winter's Tale" describes in order to tell of the antecedents and identity of the babe he carries, as well as the reason for abandoning it (III, 3, 15-58).

The narrative soliloquy is not confined to past events. On rare occasions, it reveals contemporary happenings—a device

used especially for indicating the progress of a battle. In "The Third Part of Henry the Sixth," York's "The army of the Queen hath got the field" (I, 4, 1-26), and the King's "This battle fares like to the morning's war" (II, 5, 1-54) perform this function. Shakespeare generally employs dialog for his battle effects, but Macbeth has four brief monologs,<sup>48</sup> which, accompanied by hurried entrance and exit and brandishing of sword, suggest the stir of the fight. A better instance is furnished by Kyd's "Jeronimo" (1587 c.) when Andrea gives this graphic pictorial stimulus for the imagination:

"Soldiers drop down as thick as if Death mowed them;  
As scythe-men trim the long-haired ruffian fields,  
So fast they fall, so fast to fate life yields."<sup>49</sup>

This monolog performs in words the office which modern scenery permits in action—the tumbling corpses in the battle scene of Rostand's "Cyrano," for example.

The old dramatists sometimes found it convenient to have the soliloquizer announce the scene, a fact indicated by the setting and the program of the modern play. Thaliard in "Pericles" observes, "So this is Tyre, and this the court" (I, 3, 1). Coriolanus enters with the remark, "A goodly city is this Antium" (IV, 4, 1), and he proceeds to apostrophize the city, a device used by Plautus at the opening of the second act of the "Bacchides." Aristophanes specifies the location with even greater precision, when he has Dicaeopolis of "The Acharnians" say, "These are the boundaries of my market-place."<sup>50</sup>

In Greek and Roman tragedy, exalted descriptions of nature, rather than specific locations, are given by soliloquizers, a tradition inspiring Elizabethans with some exquisite descriptions. It is interesting to note that ancient Sanskrit drama abounds in similar passages. Chárudatta, the protagonist of "The Toy-Cart," soliloquizes on an impending storm<sup>51</sup> with varied and colorful similes—a much more graphic word-painting than the monologic treatment of the same theme in "The Winter's

<sup>48</sup> V, 7, 1-4, 11-13, 14-23; V, 8, 1-3.

<sup>49</sup> Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, Vol. IV, p. 388.

<sup>50</sup> Bohn Library, Vol. I, p. 29.

<sup>51</sup> *Select Specimens of the Theater of the Hindus*, Vol. I, p. 90.

Tale" (III, 3, 49-56). In the "Sákuntalá"<sup>52</sup> there is a fervid description of the moon setting and the sun rising, not wholly incomparable, as to poetic effect, with Friar Laurence's "The gray-ey'd morn smiles on the frowning night" (II, 3, 1-8). To be sure, nature treatment in the drama has never been confined to soliloquies, but perhaps in them it finds its best opportunities. Certainly the playwright chooses monolog rather than dialog when he wishes to tell the audience the exact setting. "Romeo and Juliet" affords another instance, when Romeo makes the imaginary scene vivid in his account of the apothecary and his shop, which concludes with the remark, "As I remember, this should be the house" (V, 1, 55).

Another form of narration which is generally, though not invariably, found in monolog, may be defined by the means rather than the end,—namely, the reading of a letter. The formula is simple: the soliloquizer reads a letter aloud and comments on it. Thus two points in the exposition are effected,—first, the letter itself which usually bears directly on the plot, and second, the speaker's attitude toward the new aspect of the story, an added element of interest. The device is a favorite one in romantic drama. "Gismond of Salerne" (1568) has an ingenious trick, transcribed from Boccaccio,<sup>53</sup> serving to introduce the letter. Guisharde, while soliloquizing, accidentally breaks the cane Gismond has given him, and he finds her letter inclosed within (III, 3, 1-88). Usually the letter is introduced clumsily. In "Arden of Feversham" (pr. 1592), Michael remarks, "I have gotten such a letter as will touch the painter: and thus it is."<sup>54</sup> He proceeds to read it and is overheard. Marlowe several times avails himself of the letter-reading soliloquy, most conspicuously at the opening of "Edward the Second," where the king's letter, together with Gaveston's comment thereon, furnishes an admirable exposition of the first part of the plot.

<sup>52</sup> Translation of Monier Williams, p. 81.

<sup>53</sup> J. W. Cunliffe, "Gismond of Salerne," *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, June, 1906, pp. 438-439. A linguistic point in the soliloquy, Dr. Cunliffe shows, indicates that Boccaccio, and not Painter, is the source.

<sup>54</sup> Edited by Nicolaus Delius, p. 28.

Shakespeare uses the contrivance a number of times, but not always for purely expository purposes. The letter-reading soliloquies of Hotspur (II, 3, 1-39), Brutus (II, 1, 44-58), Malvolio (II, 5, 91 ff.) and Lady Macbeth (I, 5, 1-31) all influence their respective plots, but indirectly through character, the emphasis being on the psychological attitude of the soliloquizer toward the letter. Hotspur's anger, the credulity of Brutus, Malvolio's gullibility and the ambition of Lady Macbeth are so interesting in themselves that they are not expository in a primary sense. On the other hand, Mistress Page's reading of the love letter from Falstaff ("Merry Wives," II, 1, 1-31), the Countess's perusal of the missive from her runaway son ("All's Well," III, 2, 21-34), and Pisanio's contemplation of his master's written command ("Cymbeline," III, 2, 1-22),—these are directly and vitally connected with the plot. The instance in "Cymbeline" is very theatrical. Pisanio is maddened by the letter which directs him to murder his mistress. Her entrance at this juncture and her subsequent perusal of the note are rendered effective and intelligible by the letter-reading soliloquy which opens the scene.

The convention as here set forth, however, does not compare, as to complexity or theatricality, with its use in Calderon's "El Medico de su Honra."<sup>55</sup> There Gutierre, while soliloquizing, draws a curtain and discovers his wife Mencia writing. He seizes her letter and she faints. He reads the letter, and, after writing a note for her, goes off. She recovers, and, during a long soliloquy, she finds her husband's missive, and reads aloud his assurance of her death. Thus a tremendously sensational situation is constructed by means of a series of soliloquies in which letter-reading is an important feature.

English playwrights have not favored such complications of the device, but, as a simple means of exposition, it has been employed at intervals, even in the melodrama of recent years. John Tobin uses it in "The Curfew" (III, 3), a successful acting piece of the early nineteenth century, and, at the end of the century, Pinero resorts to it a number of times, notably in "The Cabinet Minister" (1890).<sup>56</sup>

<sup>55</sup> *Biblioteca classica*, edited by D. M. Menéndez Pelayo, Vol. XXXVI, p. 92.

<sup>56</sup> Walter H. Baker edition, pp. 3, 44, 103.

## CRITICAL COMMENT

As soon as critics notice the soliloquy, they object to it as a means of exposition. "First of all," says the Abbé d'Aubignac in his "*Pratique du Théâtre*" (1657),<sup>57</sup> "an actor must never make a Monologue, which he addresses to the Audience, with a design to inform them of something they are to know; but there must be found out something in the Truth of the Action that may be colourable to make him speak in that manner. Else 'tis a fault in the Representation, of which both Plautus and Terence are guilty." Dryden's "*Essay of Dramatic Poesy*" (1665) takes even a stronger stand against the monolog, "to which unnatural way of narration Terence is subject in all his plays."<sup>58</sup> He disapproves of the soliloquy with which Dorias opens the fourth act of the "*Eunuch*," "because she was presumed to speak directly to the audience, and to acquaint them with what was necessary to be known, but yet should have been so contrived by the poet as to have been told by persons of the drama to one another." Today Mr. Archibald Henderson expresses the same conviction, when he characterizes this type of soliloquy as reprehensible, "because it seeks to give information which may be more veraciously imparted in more natural ways."<sup>59</sup> D'Aubignac leaves the inference that the narrative soliloquy has a right to existence if properly motived, while Dryden would apparently reform it altogether, suggesting dialog in its stead. Dryden's is unquestionably the modern point of view,—yet modern only in the restricted sense of the last few years; in the eighties there were many conspicuous survivals of the narrative monolog—Mr. Posket's long account of the night's adventures, for example, in the third act of Pinero's "*Magistrate*" (1885). Whether or not we approve of the soliloquy as a revelation of thought and passion, it is certain that we condemn the expository soliloquy. The chief cause for the discredit into which the soliloquy has fallen of late, according to Dr. Eugen Kilian, is to be attributed to the "*Expositionsmonolog*"—a lame makeshift, he styles it,

<sup>57</sup> Englished as *The Whole Art of the Stage* in 1684, p. 58.

<sup>58</sup> *Dryden's Essays on the Drama*, edited by Wm. Strunk, Jr., p. 31.

<sup>59</sup> *North American Review*, March, 1909, p. 440.

for informing the audience in soliloquy of that which clumsy technic is unable to convey in other fashion—and the “Selbstcharakterisierungsmonolog,” revealing the purposes of the author.<sup>60</sup> Dr. Kilian does not consider the narrative monolog in any form a true soliloquy, because it implies a consciousness of the audience—the same objection raised by the Abbé d’Aubignac and John Dryden. The great majority of Shakespeare’s soliloquies, says the German commentator, are guilty of this fault.

Our study corroborates the truth of the assertion that the majority of Shakespeare’s soliloquies are expository. Whether or not this is to be deplored, depends largely on the point of view. Measured by the historical, rather than the modern, standard, there is ample justification for Shakespeare. As Dr. Kilian points out, there is a vast difference between the Elizabethan stage and the present one. With spectators on three sides of the stage, as well as upon it, close contact with the audience was inevitable; but, nevertheless, very rarely can the Shakespearean monologist be convicted of directly addressing his hearers.<sup>61</sup>

The Shakespearean narrative soliloquy, however, implies an audience, and this, critics agree, is a defect in technic. What may be said in extenuation of Shakespeare’s usage? First, let us remember, the spectators are on three sides of the actors; second, the Elizabethan audience demand a large amount of story, and the exposition monolog is a most expeditious medium for presenting and clarifying plots and by-plots; and third,—an important fact for the historical critic,—the various devices for revealing identity, disguise, character, intention and narration in general are at hand for Shakespeare’s use. They have an ancient lineage, and all are passed on to posterity.

The question is, what does Shakespeare do with his traditional materials? In almost every case, he improves them. The initial exposition monolog he uses only once, but then with masterly precision and daring. Self-identification is a crude contrivance at best, but he finds it convenient on three or

<sup>60</sup> *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, Vol. XXXIX, p. xvii.

<sup>61</sup> See pp. 103–107 of this dissertation.

four occasions, and he employs the prepared entrance freely. There are a half dozen graceful explanations of disguise in Shakespeare's dramas, not conspicuously superior, however, to those of predecessors or successors. The same may be said of the few monologs in which he indicates the place, or furthers the plot by means of letter-reading. After all, these are, for the most part, inconsequential instances of the expository soliloquy. Prince Hal's self-characterization, on the other hand, is unpleasantly conspicuous. Here is an artistic blemish, not because the speaker characterizes himself, but because he fails to do so. As we have observed, his attempt to establish his respectability produces the reverse impression, and he is hoist with his own petard.

( In regard both to quantity and content, however, there are only two conspicuous varieties of the Shakespearean exposition monolog, those of the plotter and of the narrator. Simple narration is the primary object of a large percentage of Shakespeare's soliloquies. It constitutes practically the sole purpose of his early monologs, but even here the author improves on his models. Thus, though all of the monologs of "The Comedy of Errors" are as dogmatically narrative as those of Plautus and Terence, they are shorter and more pointed. Again, the story of the murder which we have noted in "Richard the Third" is unlike the crude narratives of contemporary drama in that it is told with pathos and sympathy. Hamlet's first soliloquy marks the culmination of monologic exposition, so deftly is the speaker's feeling intermingled with facts intended for the audience. In the dramatic romance, especially in "Cymbeline," the playwright grows careless of verisimilitude, and inserts long monologs, baldly narrative, for the elucidation of the complicated intrigue. While these were doubtless acceptable to their audience, they cannot but make the judicious grieve.

The villains and other characters who state their intention to act, seem to have a better dramaturgic reason for existence. The narrators might tell their stories to their fellows; not so the plotters. William Congreve's defence of this species of soliloquy in his "Epistle Dedicatory" to his "Double

Dealer" (1694) is worthy of serious consideration: "It oftentimes happens to a man to have designs which require him to himself, and in their nature cannot admit of a confidant. Such, for certain, is all villainy; and other less mischievous intentions may be very improper to be communicated to a second person." Congreve's contention is a fair statement of the problem of the old playwright. In recent years, the depiction of villainy, modified by the realistic movement in letters, has not been dependent upon the soliloquy. In fact, the disappearance of the melodramatic villain is coincident with the waning of his monolog, and in the cheap theaters where he persists, he still soliloquizes. Shakespeare's villains and his host of other characters with "less mischievous intentions" show the contrivance as thoroughly practicable for the Elizabethan stage. Doubtless the outcome of the devil's monologs in miracle and morality, the soliloquies of Gloucester and Iago are primarily theatrical rather than psychological, although they are projected with vigor and grace; but, without them, two of the greatest acting dramas of the world would be nought. Indeed, if the strictures of modern criticism, or of that of Dryden, or even of the Abbé d'Aubignac, were literally applied to Shakespeare, and all of the expository soliloquies were cut,—in such a case, many of the comedies would be hopelessly mutilated and a majority of the tragedies would be rendered unintelligible. The supposition, preposterous in itself, nevertheless indicates the significance of the Shakespearean soliloquy as a means of exposition.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE SHAKESPEAREAN SOLILOQUY AN ACCOMPANIMENT OF THE ACTION

The soliloquy is of value in the structure of the drama not only as a means of direct exposition but also as an accompaniment of the action. The latter function is performed in three ways: as an explanation of accompanying "business"; as an accompaniment of an entrance, or of an exit, or as a link between the two; and as a highly complex convention with pantomimical accessories, the overheard soliloquy.

#### MISCELLANEOUS "BUSINESS"

"Business" is an elastic term applied to almost any physical action occurring on the stage. When an action is assigned to a solitary character, the spectators must thoroughly understand its meaning, and, as a rule, this can only be accomplished by soliloquy. To illustrate: if Arthur in "King John" were merely to leap from a height and then lie inanimate, the on-lookers would be mystified and consequently annoyed by the proceeding. Although Shakespeare condensed the two parts of "The Troublesome Reign" into one, he wisely retained, with only slight alterations, Arthur's explanatory monolog, "The wall is high, and yet will I leap down" (IV, 3, 1-10), concluding with a dying gasp, after the jump, "Heaven take my soul, and England keep my bones!" The act of leaping was explained in soliloquy as long ago as the "Toy Cart" and as recently as Byron's "Manfred." Sthávaraka opens a scene in the Hindu drama (u. s., p. 165) with a monolog preliminary to jumping from a balcony, while Manfred's long soliloquy reveals his intention to suicide by leaping from a cliff (I, 2).

Many other actions occur in Shakespeare with monologic interpretations. We have already observed how the author improves upon his predecessor by explaining Prince Hal's put-

ting on the crown.<sup>1</sup> Even the most obvious motions have to be carefully elucidated for the benefit of the spectators. Therefore Aaron announces that he is burying gold ("Titus Andronicus," I, 3, 1-9), and Edmund that he is wounding his arm ("Lear," II, 1, 35-37). The squeezing of the magic juice on the eyes of the sleepers in "A Midsummer-Night's Dream" is accompanied by explanatory incantations,<sup>2</sup> as indeed, to cite a remote parallel, is the poisoning of the cloak by Seneca's Medea (IV, 2).

Most impressive of all Shakespearean soliloquies which accompany "business" is that of Iachimo in Imogen's chamber ("Cymbeline," II, 2, 11-51). The situation is furnished by Boccaccio, but Shakespeare adds many touches, such as the removal of the bracelet. It is Iachimo's voicing his thoughts and passions, as well as his writings of the inventory, which intensifies the effectiveness of the episode. A not dissimilar contrivance is the long soliloquy of the thief in "The Toy-Card" (pp. 62-64) who breaks into a chamber, inventories its contents, and ponders over the sleepers. Monologic accompaniment of "business" in the presence of a character asleep must have been keenly relished by the spectators of the Norwich Whitsun play on the Creation and Fall (1533 c.) when the Pater removed a rib from the sleeping Adam and converted it into Eve.<sup>3</sup>

#### SLEEP

The monolog is often used to indicate sleep—either preparation for sleep, talking in the sleep, or apostrophizing the sleeper. Examples of the last form occur in the speeches of "Cymbeline" and "A Midsummer-Night's Dream" which we have just been discussing. These pieces also show the soliloquizer going to sleep. Such is the purpose of Imogen's prayer (II, 1, 8-10), and such the monologs of Demetreus (III, 2, 82-87; 426-430), Lysander (III, 2, 413-420), Helena (III, 2, 431-436), and Hermia (III, 2, 442-447). Helena thus pre-

<sup>1</sup> See *ante*, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> II, 2, 27-34, 66-83; III, 2, 448-463.

<sup>3</sup> Manly, Vol. I, p. 1.

ludes her slumber:

"Sleep, that sometimes shuts up sorrow's eye,  
Steal me awhile from mine own company."

"The Toy-Cart" affords an instance of this type of soliloquy (p. 59), Shakespeare's predecessors occasionally employ it,<sup>4</sup> Racine opens "Les Plaideurs" with a comic version of the device, while Mr. Bernard Shaw uses it most realistically to close the first act of his "Arms and the Man" (1894), where the hero, only partially awake, strives in vain to fight off the drowsiness which finally overcomes him. The scene in "Lear" in which Kent is shown in the stocks concludes in much the same fashion (II, 2, 177-180).

Talking in the sleep is by no means an uncommon form of monolog. "The strings, my lord, are false," says the partially awakened Lucius ("Julius Caesar," IV, 3, 292). Shakespeare also uses the device as a transition from slumber to soliloquy; Hermia's soliloquy (II, 2, 145-156) begins in this way, and so does Imogen's (IV, 2, 291-295). Talking in the sleep occurs in pieces as widely divergent as "The Clouds" of Aristophanes,<sup>5</sup> "The Toy-Cart" (p. 63), Lessing's "Minna von Barnhelm" (I, 1), Schiller's "Räuber" (II, 2), the "Caius Gracchus" of Sheridan Knowles (IV, 4), and the "Ulysses" of Mr. Stephen Phillips (III, 1). To be sure, this type of monolog, like the sleep-walking scene of Lady Macbeth, scarcely ranks as soliloquy, since it is not conscious utterance; but it seems worth a note in passing, in connection with the other monologic contrivances for the portrayal of sleep.

A common device in Elizabethan times is the soliloquy over the sleeper. In this category fall Iachimo's sensuous description of Imogen (II, 1, 14-23), Oberon's grotesque spell over Titania (II, 2, 27-34), and the exquisite apostrophe of Brutus to the sleeping Lucius (II, 1, 229-233; IV, 3, 267-272). These speeches are not merely rhetorical ornaments: they also inform the audience that the recumbent figure is asleep. Shakespeare's immediate predecessors and successors often make

<sup>4</sup> For example, Lyly's "Endimion," *Works*, edited by Bond, Vol. III, p. 38.

<sup>5</sup> *Comedies*, translated by Wm. J. Hickie, Vol. I, p. 118.

use of the contrivance. Lyly's "Endimion" has an apostrophizing incantation (Vol. II, p. 38), a trick frequently repeated in "A Midsummer-Night's Dream." Most concise is Light-born's soliloquy in Marlowe's "Edward the Second:" "He sleeps" (V, 5). Greene's "Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay" contains a comic apostrophe to the sleeper (Sc. XI), Beaumont's "Knight of the Burning Pestle" a romantic one (III, 1), while Evadne's stirring apostrophe to the king whom she is about to murder, in "The Maid's Tragedy" of Beaumont and Fletcher (V, 2), is used for tragic effect. In imitation of Elizabethan technic, the device recurs in the drama of the romantic revival. Shelley's "Cenci" (1819) contains a typical instance (V, 3), and the fourth act of Talfourd's "Ion" (1836) opens with a situation parallel to that in "The Maid's Tragedy."

A variant of the soliloquy over the sleeper is the soliloquy over one who has fainted, a device used at intervals from the eighth to the nineteenth century. Makaranda in the Hindu drama "Málali and Mádhava" apostrophizes his friend who has fainted,\* in much the same fashion that Claude Melnotte in "The Lady of Lyons" calls upon his beloved who has lost consciousness. The nearest approach to the convention in Shakespeare is the Nurse's summoning of Juliet (IV, 5, 1-15), who, lying in a trance, is first mistaken as asleep and then as dead. This is an unusual occurrence, however, as apostrophes to the sleeping or dead are almost invariably given not only for emotional effect but also for informing, or re-informing, the audience as to the real condition of the prostrate person. Swoon, sleep and death are difficult to differentiate on the stage, and hence the necessity of verbal explanation. Thus, after the soliloquy of Enobarbus ("Antony and Cleopatra," IV, 9), the eavesdropping soldier suggests, "He sleeps," but the Sentry retorts, "Swoons rather," and a moment later he announces, "The hand of death hath raught him."

#### DEATH

Soliloquies over the dead are almost a mannerism of "The Second Part of Henry the Sixth," where they occur five times,

\* *Select Specimens of the Hindu Drama*, Vol. II, p. 101.

thrice as an accompaniment for bearing off the corpse.<sup>7</sup> Owing to the absence of a front curtain for the Elizabethan stage, such awkward contrivances for disposing of the slain were necessary. In "The Third Part of Henry the Sixth" (II, 5), two soliloquizers drag in the bodies of their adversaries and also carry them out. To be sure, Shakespearean apostrophes to the dead are not always utilitarian;<sup>8</sup> Mary Antony's "O pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth" (III, 1, 254-275) is primarily histrionic; Imogen's lament over the headless trunk (IV, 2, 295-332) exists for the sake of the situation, while the Prince's apostrophe to the pseudo-dead Falstaff (V, 4, 102-110) accentuates the ludicrous effect of the monolog which follows. Ordinarily, however, such laments are intended to establish beyond a doubt the fact that the subject of the monolog is dead, as well as to move the beholder with pity and terror. This is the function of the Prince's soliloquy over Hotspur (V, 4, 87-101) and of Charmian's over Cleopatra (V, 2, 316-322). In both instances, the soliloquizer completes a sentence of the dying—a trick cleverly burlesqued in Sheridan's "Critic."<sup>9</sup>

Soliloquies of the dying are also used for expository purposes. In "The Third Part of Henry the Sixth," Clifford's "Here burns my candle out; ay, here it dies" (II, 6, 1-30) and Warwick's speech (V, 2, 5-27) in which he asserts that his eyes are "now dimm'd with death's black veil,"—these soliloquies afford ample preparation for the deaths of their speakers.

Monologs over the dead and of the dying flourish in Elizabethan drama. Both are found in a somewhat embryonic condition in the Hegge play of "Noah and Lamech,"<sup>10</sup> where the youth slain by Lamech states clearly in four lines that he is expiring, and then Lamech, alone with the corpse, utters his

<sup>7</sup> IV, 1, 144-147; IV, 10, 82-90; V, 2, 31-65.

<sup>8</sup> Indeed such soliloquies may be regarded, in part at least, as a survival of the ancient custom of uttering formal laments over the slain—for example, Hrothgar's lament for Aeschere in *Beowulf* (ll. 1321-1344) and Roland's for Oliver in the *Chanson de Roland* (Stanza CLIII).

<sup>9</sup> Dent edition, III, 1, ll. 227, 232.

<sup>10</sup> Manly, Vol. I, p. 37.

contrition briefly but poignantly. The early soliloquies are, as a rule, painfully expository. The dying speech of Stukely in Peele's "Battle of Alcazar" informs the audience, addressed as "friends and lordings," of his entire life history, and concludes:

"Stukely, the story of thy life is told:  
Here breathe thy last, and bid thy friends farewell."<sup>11</sup>

The last words of Cambises are equally confidential. He explains to the audience the cause of his death, showing them the sword which "ran me thus into the side, as you right well may see."<sup>12</sup> The final couplet,

"Thus gasping heer on ground I lye; for nothing I doo care;  
A just reward for my misdeeds my death doth plaine declare,"

seems sufficiently explicit as to stage business, without the added direction, "Heere let him quake and stir." The speech by Ambidexter which follows is in the nature of a soliloquy over the dead, furnishing intelligence as to the moment of decease:

"But beholde, now with Death he doth strive.  
Alas, good king! alas, he is gone!"

The monolog of "Ralph with a forked arrow through his head" in "The Knight of the Burning Pestle" thus parodies the conclusion of such turgid death soliloquies: "I die! fly, fly, my soul, to Grocer's Hall!"<sup>13</sup>

Marlowe retains the soliloquy as a device for portraying death: such is the prayer of the wounded Sigismund ("Tamburlaine," Part II, II, 3) and such the lament of Theridimas before removing the body of Olympia (u. s., IV, 3); but the mad ravings of Zabina ("Tamburlaine," Part I, V, 1) and the frenzied apostrophes of Tamburlaine (u. s., II, 4) transcend the purely functional in their stress on the emotional situation. The emotional value of the death soliloquy appeals strongly to the closet dramatist. Thomas Lovell Beddoes

<sup>11</sup> *Dramatic Works*, edited by Bullen, Vol. I, p. 290.

<sup>12</sup> *Manly*, Vol. I, p. 208.

<sup>13</sup> *Dramatic Works*, edited by Dyce, Vol. II, p. 227.

revels in garish apostrophes to corpses,<sup>14</sup> as well as apostrophes to the abstract conceptions of Death and Sleep. Some of the greatest passages in Shakespeare are philosophizings on these themes, but they do not concern the present inquiry into mechanism. A combination of sentiment and exposition, the Shakespearean death soliloquy is, as a rule, fundamentally a part of the machinery of the plot.

### SUICIDE

Even more evident is the mechanical aspect of the suicide soliloquy, which, like that of the dying, purposes to inform the audience that the meaning of the speaker's motions is death. A character's falling on his sword or stabbing himself are movements so hurried that some spectators would not comprehend them without a word of commentary. Preliminary apostrophes to the fatal weapon are not uncommon. Aecius, for example, in the "Valentinian" of Beaumont and Fletcher, kisses his sword and addresses it before killing himself (IV, 4). Shakespeare often contrives to give the necessary information in a couplet:

"Caesar, thou art reveng'd,  
Even with the sword that killed thee" (V, 3, 45-46);  
"Caesar, now be still;  
I kill'd not thee with half so good a will" (V, 5, 50-51);  
"I kissed thee ere I killed thee: no way but this,  
Killing myself to die upon a kiss" (V, 2, 258-359).

These brief apostrophes to the departed have their own meaning, but they exist primarily to mark the passing of the spirits of Brutus, Cassius and Othello. Likewise, the soliloquy of Titinius ("Julius Caesar," V, 3, 80-90) announces his suicide with his final words, "Come, Cassius' sword, and find Titinius' heart." The suicide usually makes two points in his monolog: first, the instrument with which he intends to kill himself; and second, his approaching death. Juliet's soliloquy (V, 3, 161-170) performs the dual function:

<sup>14</sup> *Works*, edited by Edmund Gosse; *Bride's Tragedy*, Vol. I, p. 146, and *Death's Jest Book*, Vol. II, p. 121.

"O happy dagger!

This is thy sheath (Stabs herself) ; there rust and let me die."

As stabbing requires verbal elucidation, so the mere action of drinking from a cup and then falling prone is meaningless, unless there is an explanation that the cup contains poison. Romeo's long soliloquy over the body of Juliet (V, 3, 74-120) explains that he is taking the poison: "O true apothecary, thy drugs are quick;" and then, as usual, in such cases, he affirms his death: "Thus with a kiss I die." Juliet's elaborate soliloquy preparatory to drinking the potion (IV, 3, 13-58), though lacking the suicidal intent, has something of the frenzied mood of self-destruction characteristic of the soliloquizers who poison themselves. An early analog occurs in "Gismond of Salerne" (V, 2), when the heroine, lamenting and meditating revenge, pours a vial of poison into the cup containing her lover's heart and partakes of the beverage.

The suicide soliloquy has classical precedent, since it is used by Sophocles when his Ajax, alone on the seashore, indulges in fervid apostrophe and falls on his sword. It is a far cry to the long, fantastic and grandiose suicide soliloquy of Ajax at the conclusion of Heywood's "Iron Age" (pr. 1632). Introduced with a pageant crossing the stage, interrupted by Echo responses, illumined by such expressions as "Ha, ha, ha," "foh, foh," "sink the Grecian fleete in seas of Ajax blood: so ho, so ho," and terminated with an address to gods, men, "Furies, enraged Spirits, Tortures all,"—this was surely a part to tear a cat in. The speech marks the culmination of the bombast and violence of the suicide soliloquy popular among the Elizabethans,—for example, the monlog during which Isabella of "The Spanish Tragedy" cuts down the arbor and then herself (IV, 2), and those during which Bajazeth and his wife brain themselves ("Tamburlaine," Part I, V, 1). Shakespeare eliminates the grotesque but not the horrible: he retains sword, dagger and poisoned cup, but so effectively does he manage them that his methods have become laws for practically all subsequent suicide soliloquies. In 1887, Mr. Pinero made use of the vial device for the suicide<sup>15</sup> of his pro-

<sup>15</sup> When the happy ending was substituted, the soliloquy was altered from the point where the speaker is about to take the poison.



tagonist in "The Profligate." During the long monolog, Renshaw pours the poison and drinks it. Then, according to the old formula, the poison is named for the audience: "A line to Murray—telling him—poison—morphine—message"; and death is presaged in the fragmentary sentences beginning "The light is out."

#### ENTRANCE, LINK AND EXIT SPEECHES

The soliloquy accompanying the dramatic depiction of suicide, death, sleep and stage business in general, is primarily expository. Not necessarily explanatory of the action are the brief soliloquies accompanying the departure of a character or his arrival or bridging a short interval between an exit and an entrance. These we shall term, respectively, exit speeches, entrance speeches and links. Freytag speaks of monologs as opening an act, closing it, or being between two scenes of commotion.<sup>18</sup> The monologs we are about to examine have the special function of opening, joining and closing episodes. To be sure, it is evident that all soliloquies, by virtue of their nature, must be either at the beginning or the end of a scene, or between two conversations; but the entrance, link and exit speeches exist because of their location. Usually very short, they are employed to give ease and finish to a scene; and, paradoxical as it may seem, these artificial speeches are used to avoid the appearance of artifice.

#### THE ENTRANCE SOLILOQUY

Thus the entrance soliloquy prevents the simultaneous appearance of A at one door and B at the other. Even though they were meeting by appointment, they probably would not arrive at the same instant. Consequently A comes on a moment before B, and fills the interval with some remark—very likely stating what the appointment is. So Eglamour in "The Two Gentlemen" observes,

"This is the hour that Madam Silvia  
Entreated me to call and know her mind" (IV, 3, 1-2).

<sup>18</sup> *Technique of the Drama*, translated by Elias MacEwan, p. 219.

Again at the opening of the fifth act, he announces,

"And now it is about the very hour  
That Silvia, at Friar Patrick's cell, should meet me."

In each case, the lady appears forthwith. Shakespeare soon abandons the obvious contrivance of meeting by appointment, but his entrance soliloquies generally, in some way, prepare for the ensuing scene. For example, Oberon wonders what has happened to his queen (III, 2, 1-3), whereupon Puck enters and informs him.

"Romeo and Juliet" affords the best illustrations of the entrance soliloquy purely as such, without any ulterior purpose. Romeo's

"Can I go forward when my heart is here?  
Turn back, dull earth, and find thy center out" (II, 1, 1-2)

marks both his appearance and his disappearance, and like the famous line with which he enters the orchard (II, 1, 1), it has no connection with the ensuing scene. So Friar Laurence's muttering,

"Saint Francis be my speed! how oft tonight  
Have my old feet stumbled at graves!" (V, 3, 121-122)

merely indicates his presence in the tomb. Such speeches are pleasing interludes between the stirring episodes of the drama.

Shakespeare is also fond of the entrance soliloquy for facilitating his battle scenes. Rest from the heat of the fight is the theme of the entrance speeches in "Troilus and Cressida" (V, 8, 1-4) and "The Third Part of Henry the Sixth" (II, 3, 1-5). "Rest, sword, thou hast thy fill of blood and death," says Hector; and Warwick asserts, "Spite of spite, needs must I rest awhile." Macbeth's despondent preludes to his encounters with young Siward and with Macduff (V, 7, 1-4; V, 8, 1-3) add excitement to the mood of the battle, but their important dramaturgic function is to offer an excuse for the arrival of Macbeth before that of his opponent. If Macbeth and Siward or Macbeth and Macduff were to enter simultaneously, meet and proceed to fight, the manipulation would be palpable. As it is, the entrance soliloquies permit an appearance of naturalism in the encounter.

The entrance speech has been a popular contrivance from ancient to recent times. Sanskrit drama furnishes numerous instances. Five acts of "The Toy-Cart" open with a little monolog spoken by a servant.<sup>17</sup> Entrance soliloquies have proved especially serviceable in comedy: the "Lysistrata" of Aristophanes, and the fourth act of the "Mercator" of Plautus open with the device, and Molière employs it frequently. English comedy has made use of the entrance speech from the time of "Gammer Gurton's Needle"<sup>18</sup> (pr. 1575) to that of Pinero's "Cabinet Minister" (1890). The entrance soliloquy opening the Pinero farce constitutes what is known in theatrical parlance as "patter talk," since it has no relation to the plot and accordingly may be missed by the spectators while seating themselves. In this respect, the brief initial entrance speech differs from the more elaborate initial exposition monolog which is necessary for an understanding of the plot. Romantic as well as comic dramas afford many examples of the entrance soliloquy. Beaumont and Fletcher abound in entrance, link and exit speeches, and so do the pieces of the romantic revival of the early nineteenth century. In Thomas Dibdin's stage adaptation of Scott's "Heart of Midlothian," there are four entrance monologs which are used to prepare entrances.<sup>19</sup> The prepared entrance often concludes the link as well as the entrance soliloquy. It is the sole office of Falstaff's link in "The Merry Wives" (III, 5, 58-60).

#### THE LINK

The link, we have observed, serves to join episodes. This, according to Cailhava in his treatise "De l'Art de la Comédie" (1772),<sup>20</sup> is a prime requisite, without which the monolog is

<sup>17</sup> U. s., pp. 42, 59, 72, 105, 143.

<sup>18</sup> Manly, Vol. II, p. 119.

<sup>19</sup> *Cumberland's Plays*, No. 3, pp. 9, 17, 31, 32.

<sup>20</sup> Edition of 1786, Vol. I, p. 225. Also, edition of 1772, Vol. I, p. 257: "Il faut nécessairement préparer et amener d'un peu loin un autre personnage, qui, à l'aide d'un monologue, mette une distance vraisemblable entre les personnes qui ne doivent pas se trouver ensemble." Sonnenfels, Gottsched, Boileau and Voltaire had equally clear conceptions of the function of the link: see Frierich Dösel's *Der dramatische Monolog in der Poetik des 17. und*

defective. All soliloquies, it is true, unless they open or close an act, perform the function of joining in a general way, but the link, in the restricted sense in which we use the term, has that special object. It is a short monolog filling the interval between an exit and an entrance, a factor of the structure, rather than of the plot. In other words, no matter how illuminating a remark it may be, it is fundamentally a mechanical contrivance for bridging a gap in the action. As the entrance soliloquy is a graceful subterfuge for preventing the simultaneous appearance of A and B, so the link relieves the necessity of having A enter the moment that B leaves the stage.

Frequently the link is only a line or two in length, sometimes merely an interjection between an exit and an entrance. The shortest soliloquies on record, the "Ah" in "*Tartuffe*"<sup>21</sup> and the "Hm" in "*The Pillars of Society*,"<sup>22</sup> are links. Both are expressions of emotion occurring between an exit and an entrance, when the speaker is alone. Such is King John's exclamation, "My mother dead!" (IV, 2, 181).<sup>23</sup> Henry the Fifth's "God-a-mercy, old heart! thou speak'st cheerfully" (IV, 1, 34), as Erpingham leaves him, illustrates a form of the soliloquy not uncommon in the link, the apostrophe to the just departed.<sup>24</sup>

Falstaff uses the address to the departed in a link evidently intended to produce a broadly comic effect ("Henry IV, Part II, 1, 2, 255-260). The comic link is a variety Shakespeare frequently employs.<sup>25</sup> Sometimes the interlude between an exit and an entrance assumes the form of a little poem. Such

18. *Jahrhunderts*, Hamburg, 1897, pp. 16, 17. It is curious that the type has been neglected by English critics. Düsel notes Lessing's use of the "Pausenfüllmonolog" and the "Verbindungsmonolog," pp. 22-25, 42.

<sup>21</sup> "Grands Écrivains" edition, IV, 1, l. 1268.

<sup>22</sup> *Prose Dramas*, translation edited by Wm. Archer, p. 210.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. *Taming of the Shrew*, II, 1, 37-38, V, 1, 7; *Julius Caesar*, III, 2, 265-266; *All's Well*, II, 3, 282-283; *As You Like It*, I, 2, 269-270; *Othello*, III, 1, 42-43; *Lear*, III, 6, 4-5.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. *Henry the Fifth*, IV, 1, 63; *As You Like It*, I, 1, 90-92; *Othello*, III, 3, 90-92.

<sup>25</sup> *Merry Wives*, II, 2, 143-149, 156-159, V, 5, 38-40; *Measure for Measure*, I, 2, 83-85.

are the jingling quatrains of Robin Goodfellow,<sup>26</sup> and the sententious quatrain of the Queen in "Hamlet" (IV, 5, 16-20). The exquisitely lyrical addresses of Brutus to his sleeping page (II, 1, 229-233; IV, 3, 267-274) have a utilitarian as well as an æsthetic significance. In one case, the speech separates the departure of the conspirators from the entrance of Portia: if she came in immediately, it would almost appear that she had been listening, and, at any rate, the machinery would creak. Again, if the soliloquy before the apparition of the ghost were omitted, there would be a notable loss of "atmospheric" effect. Thus the Shakespearean link, whether interjection or brief remark, or comical or musical interlude, is deftly fitted into the structure of the play.

The choral comment of Greek drama performs the function of the link. Despite the presence of the chorus, however, there are one or two instances of the device in Aristophanes.<sup>27</sup> In "The Clouds," Strepsiades is assigned a link before knocking at a door, a contrivance often employed by Molière,<sup>28</sup> and doubtless by the *commedia del arte*. Although unobtrusive, the link is the typical soliloquy in Molière; for example, the casual reader or spectator would say that "Le Mariage Forcé" has not one soliloquy, but a careful study shows that it contains seven links, all spoken by Sganarelle, who is on the stage during the entire action. Links are used frequently in Sanskrit drama, and in the plays of all modern nations. Indeed, this kind of soliloquy seems to have increased in popularity with the passage of time. When Robert Wilmot recast his "Gismond of Salerne" (1568) as "Tancred and Gismunda" (1591), he added a link to give plausibility to the movement.<sup>29</sup> Shakespeare's predecessors did not use the link so often as he did, nor he so often as Beaumont and Fletcher. Even Ibsen, who is credited with having abandoned the soliloquy, puts five

<sup>26</sup> *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, III, 2, 396-399, 437-440.

<sup>27</sup> Translation of Wm. J. Hickie, Vol. I, *The Acharnians*, p. 10; *The Clouds*, p. 122.

<sup>28</sup> For example, the soliloquies of Sganarelle in *L'École des Maris*, II, 2; II, 4; II, 7; III, 3.

<sup>29</sup> Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, Vol. VII, p. 45.

links in one play, "The Pillars of Society"<sup>80</sup> (1877). True, these are chiefly ejaculations, but it must be remembered that Shakespeare has some of the same type. As late as "Michael and His Lost Angel" (1896) by Mr. Henry Arthur Jones, the link has its vogue,<sup>81</sup> and, in fact, it still survives.<sup>82</sup>

The link often indicates a passage of time. This occurs when A has to leave the scene, perform some errand, and return. Stage time is invariably less than actual time, and, accordingly, a few words of soliloquy by B will give the effect of a sufficient interval elapsing before the reappearance of A. So the Second Murderer in "Richard the Third" speaks three lines (I, 4, 279-281) during which the First Murderer drags off the body, disposes of it and comes back. A link of the same length is twice assigned to Romeo (II, 2, 139-141, 156-158), while Juliet goes to answer the summons of the Nurse and returns. An exactly parallel service is performed by the link of Anasúyá in the "Sákuntalá" of Kálidása,<sup>83</sup> and similar offices are effected by links in Plautus<sup>84</sup> and Terence.<sup>85</sup> The "Damon and Pythias" (1564 c.) of Richard Edwards has two links,<sup>86</sup> closely following the Roman model. Molière's "Étourdi" contains a conspicuous illustration of the soliloquy's indicating the passage of time, for, during Lélie's brief monolog (II, 1, 489-497), Mascarille spreads broadcast the news of the death of Lélie's father.

X Shakespeare is fond of a slightly different form of the time link,—namely, that which bridges the gap while B is summoning C to the presence of A. For example:

"HORATIO. Let them come in. (Exit Attendant.)  
I do not know from what part of the world  
I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet."  
(Enter Sailor.) (IV, 6, 3-5.)

<sup>80</sup> U. s., pp. 196, 210, 215, 228, 240.

<sup>81</sup> Macmillan edition, p. 85.

<sup>82</sup> For example, in Act II of M. Bernstein's *The Thief*.

<sup>83</sup> Translation by Monier Williams, p. 79.

<sup>84</sup> Translation by H. Riley, Vol. I, *Miles Gloriosus*, p. 93; *Bacchides*, p. 190.

<sup>85</sup> Translation by H. Riley, *Heautontimorumenos*, p. 162.

<sup>86</sup> Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, Vol. IX, pp. 36, 43.

Even shorter is the link of the King in "All's Well." "Thus he his special nothing ever prologues," he observes, as Lafeu goes out and returns, ushering in Helena (II, 1, 95). It is interesting to find at the opening of Mr. Pinero's "Profligate" a link of precisely the same length and purpose, Hugh Murray speaking a sentence while his servant goes out and ushers in Lord Dangars. The contrivance is twice employed in "Othello" (IV, 2, 20-23, 107-109), and a well known passage in "Macbeth" accomplishes a similar object. Lady Macbeth, after dispatching a servant to find her lord, soliloquizes,

"Nought's had, all's spent,  
Where our desire is got without content.  
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy  
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy" (III, 2, 4-7)—

whereupon Macbeth enters. This is the fourth Shakespearean link we have noted in the form of a quatrain. The rimes suggest the ornamental nature of the monologic interlude, but there are not enough illustrations to show that Shakespeare, like his contemporary, Lope de Vega, consciously makes a metrical distinction between soliloquy and dialog. In Lope's essay, "El Arte nuevo de hazar Comedias en este Tiempo," he states that the sonnet is an appropriate form for the soliloquy, and he often puts his theory into practice.

#### THE EXIT SOLILOQUY

There are four instances in Shakespeare of quatrains, consisting of two couplets each, appearing as exit speeches.<sup>87</sup> Often the episode of the Elizabethan drama is terminated with a couplet—or, sometimes, a pair of couplets—and frequently the scene ends in monolog; hence the coincidence. The function of the monologic conclusion is similar to that of the monologic opening. There was no drop curtain in the Elizabethan theater, we must remember, making possible the tableaux with which a modern act may begin or end, and, accordingly, all of the characters have to go off as well as come on. To have

<sup>87</sup> *Richard III*, IV, 2, 123-126; *Romeo and Juliet*, II, 2, 187-190; *Merry Wives*, IV, 2, 106-109; *Twelfth Night*, I, 5, 327-330.

many depart at once is awkward, and so, for the sake of variety, one person is often left to say a few words before leaving the stage. Even to have two people depart together is a more difficult feat than to have them enter, inasmuch as the exits are at the rear of the stage, and the actors should not say their final words with their backs to the audience. It therefore frequently occurs that when A and B are conversing, A leaves a moment before B, and the latter has a brief soliloquy, generally ending in a rime, while he is getting off the stage. The exit speech, then, like the link and the entrance soliloquy, serves a mechanical purpose: it facilitates the departure of the last speaker in a scene. The rime tag is spoken, presumably, when the actor is at the exit door, and while he is facing the audience.

Very often Shakespeare's exit soliloquy consists merely of a couplet.<sup>88</sup> As we have noted, he sometimes employs two couplets, and sometimes three, four, five, or six verses, concluding with a tag. Occasionally prose is used, and there are rare instances of a line or less serving as an exit speech. The son carries off his father's body with a single explanatory verse in "The Third Part of Henry the Sixth" (II, 5, 113); Hermia departs with one line in "A Midsummer-Night's Dream" (III, 2, 344), while Menenius in "Coriolanus" goes off with the ejaculation, "fie, fie, fie!" (IV, 2, 54). This utterance is truly a soliloquy, comparable as to length with the exclamatory links of Molière and Ibsen.

Like the link, the exit speech may assume the guise of the apostrophe to the just departed,—for example, Jessica's address to the retreating figure of her parent:

"Farewell, and if my fortune be not cross'd,  
I have a father, you a daughter lost" (II, 5, 56-57).<sup>89</sup>

Further, the exit soliloquy is similar to the link and the entrance speech in that it may consist of a bit of moralizing,

<sup>88</sup> *Henry VI*, Part II, V, 2, 29-30; *Two Gentlemen*, V, 2, 55-56; *Merchant of Venice*, II, 5, 56-57; *Henry IV*, Part I, III, 3, 229-230; *Hamlet*, III, 3, 97-98; *Othello*, V, 1, 128-129; *Macbeth*, III, 2, 141-142; *Pericles*, I, 1, 170-171.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. *Richard III*, I, 4, 286-290; *Romeo and Juliet*, II, 2, 187-190; III, 5, 235-242; *Troilus and Cressida*, III, 3, 313-316.



a brief comment on the plot, or an expression of love or the like; but, also like the allied monologs, it never conveys new information. Its purpose is not to narrate the story, but to conclude the episode.

Sometimes the conclusion is brought about in a comical fashion, by what is known in the vernacular of the modern stage as the "gag." Shakespeare is not above this appeal to the groundlings,—witness the churlish invective of Thersites ("Troilus and Cressida," III, 3, 313-316), Falstaff's giving vent to his exuberant spirits ("The First Part of Henry the Fourth," III, 3, 229-230), Mistress Page's jovial pondering on an old saw ("Merry Wives," IV, 2, 106-109), and Cloten's indignant iteration of the phrase which chafes his vanity ("Cymbeline," II, 3, 161). The doggerel couplet terminating the first act of "Lear" is an indecent "gag," so inappropriate that it seems spurious.<sup>29a</sup>

In connection with the exit speech, it is an interesting fact that all of the eleven soliloquies in "The First Part of Henry the Sixth" are followed by an exit, and that, although occasionally expanded into a sort of choral comment, narrative, prophetic or premonitory, they usually perform the function of the exit speech. The piece is unusual in that it ends with an exit soliloquy, not without precedent, however, as the "Bacchides" of Plautus has such a conclusion.

Plautus and Terence many times have a soliloquy followed by an exit, but it is generally narrative in content. The Hindu dramatists employ it in the true Elizabethan fashion. Early it creeps into English drama, and Shakespeare's predecessors establish it as a convention, and his successors avail themselves of it as often as he does. Beaumont and Fletcher have an especial fondness for exit speeches long and short, rimed and unrimed. With the appearance of the drop curtain, exit speeches diminish in number, but the convention persists, in isolated instances, through the nineteenth century. Act III of

<sup>29a</sup> For the excellent reasons given by A. C. Bradley, in his *Shakespearean Tragedy*, pp. 450-452, Professor Bradley makes some interesting observations on the comparative number of soliloquies followed by exits in the tragedies.

Sheil's "Evadne" (1821) terminates with an exit speech of two lines, probably due to the fact that it is founded on Shirley's "Traitor" (1631), which contains several exit couplets. Likewise the fourth act of Miss Mitford's "Rienzi" (1828) and the first act of her "Otto of Wittelsbach" end with exit speeches of two lines each. Not as a medieval survival, but as a modern stage contrivance, Ibsen projects the little soliloquies which conclude the first and last acts of "A Doll's House" (1879). These monologs are not accompanied by exits, but they are virtually exit speeches, since it is their function to give an artistic finish to the scene.

#### THE OVERHEARD SOLILOQUY

The overheard soliloquy, with its strange complexities and inconsistencies, is an important type of the monologic accompaniment of action. The connection between eavesdropping and movement is not evident until one remembers that the actor overhearing a soliloquy invariably indulges in pantomimical by-play, and further, that the overheard soliloquy involves one or more entrances. Thus it is allied with the monolog accompanying stage business and with the entrance, link and exit speech. Indeed, there is a variety of soliloquy which we shall style the "unconscious entrance" so intimately associated with the overheard soliloquy that it seems best to treat it in this connection.

The only similarity between the unconscious entrance and the entrance soliloquy is that both are spoken as soon as the soliloquizers enter. The unconscious entrance soliloquy is so called, because its speaker is unconscious of the person or persons already on the stage. The verisimilitude of the situation is no more to be questioned than that of the convention which placed two opposing camps on the same Elizabethan stage.

The soliloquizer who enters oblivious to the presence of others may or may not be overheard, but, for convenience of classification, let us confine the term to the monologs which are not overheard. An illustration is afforded by "The Third Part of Henry the Sixth," when Edward runs in, with a despairing cry, apparently oblivious of Warwick, who, as evidenced by his

next speech, is unconscious of Edward's soliloquy (II, 3, 6-8). In "The Second Part of Henry the Sixth," Iden ruminates in his garden (IV, 10, 18-25), not noticing Cade, whose apart shows no indication that he overhears the soliloquy.

The unconscious entrance has an ancient lineage. Polynices in "The Phoenician Women" of Euripides considers himself alone when he says, "What ho! who goes there? or is it an idle sound I fear? . . . Well, there is help at hand, for the altar's hearth is close and there are people in the palace."<sup>40</sup> Not until his next remark does he observe the chorus: "Come, let me sheathe my sword in its dark scabbard and ask these maidens standing near the house, who they are." The unconscious entrance is a favorite contrivance in Roman comedy,<sup>41</sup> and in the old Hindu drama.<sup>42</sup> Molière's soliloquizers often fail to notice others on the stage. In "Melicerte," little Myrtil comes in talking to a sparrow in its cage, but the method is not always so naturalistic. Martine of "Le Medecin Malgré Lui" vehemently chatters to herself (I, 3) until she bumps into two men,—producing the desired laugh. Again, while Sganarelle's wife is soliloquizing ("Sganarelle," I, 5), he enters with a two-line monolog which he delivers before he sees her. She continues her soliloquy, unconscious of him, although he interrupts with three aparts.

Such complexities do not occur on the English stage, where, oftentimes the convention is ludicrously simple. Preston emphasizes its absurdity when he has Cambises ask, "Is there nought to be my help?"<sup>43</sup> with Ambidexter only a step away. From the time of the "Second Shepherds' Play"<sup>44</sup> and "Gammer Gurton's Needle"<sup>45</sup> to that of "The Good Natured Man"<sup>46</sup> and "She Stoops to Conquer,"<sup>47</sup> the unconscious

<sup>40</sup> *Plays*, translated by E. P. Coleridge, Vol. II, p. 226.

<sup>41</sup> Plautus, Vol. I, pp. 178, 189, 304, 382, 556; Vol. II, p. 169. Terence, pp. 46, 49.

<sup>42</sup> *Select Specimens of the Hindu Drama*, Vol. I, pp. 67, 91, 207; Vol. II, pp. 20, 193, 293.

<sup>43</sup> Manly, Vol. II, p. 208.

<sup>44</sup> Manly, Vol. I, pp. 96, 98.

<sup>45</sup> Manly, Vol. II, p. 119.

<sup>46</sup> "Belles Lettres" edition, pp. 64, 99, 108.

<sup>47</sup> Same volume, pp. 179, 207, 215, 226.

entrance has been most serviceable in English comedy, although it has been used in all forms of drama. Whetstone's Cassandra concludes her unconscious entrance soliloquy by discovering Promos in this naive fashion: "See, as I wished, Lord Promos is in place!"<sup>48</sup> As in this case, the device usually follows the order we have observed in Euripides, a sequence firmly established by Plautus: first, soliloquy; second, an apart in which the other person or persons are discovered; and third, direct address. Numerous contrivances of this sort, with slight variations, survive in the early nineteenth century.<sup>49</sup>

Taking advantage of the fact that the unconscious entrance soliloquy is best suited for comic effects, Shakespeare casts the discourse of Autolycus on his profession in this mold ("Winter's Tale," IV, 4, 605-630). The bystanders are quite as oblivious to him as he to them, but, when he discovers them, he exclaims, "If they have overheard me now, why, hanging." This admission of the possibility of being overheard is interesting, and perhaps it explains the parenthesis of the soliloquizing Angelo, "Let no man hear me" ("Measure for Measure," II, 4, 10),—a remark which Dr. Kilian<sup>50</sup> points out contends with our conception of the soliloquy. For the present, however, let us not attempt to rationalize the overheard soliloquy, since our immediate object is merely to examine it as it occurs.

Sometimes a series of soliloquies is overheard by one character and not by others. This arrangement is used in "The Third Part of Henry the Sixth" (II, 5), when the son mourns over the corpse of his father and the father over the corpse of his son, each soliloquizer unconscious of the other but both overheard by King Henry. The device is pushed to the utmost extravagance when the soliloquies of father and son and the aparts of the king are interlarded, in parallel phraseology, thus:

"Son. Was ever son so ru'd a father's death?

Father. Was ever father so bemoan'd his son?

King Henry. Was ever king so griev'd for subjects' woe?"

<sup>48</sup> *Six Old Plays*, p. 27.

<sup>49</sup> For example, John O'Keefe's *Wild Oats* (1791), in Mrs. Inchbald's collection, Vol. II, p. 76; and the *Alfonso* (1802) of M. G. Lewis, published by J. Bell, p. 2.

<sup>50</sup> U. s., p. XXX.

Doubtless the fact that son and father consider themselves alone was supposed to add to the tragic irony.

A variant of the same device is used for comic effect in "Love's Labors Lost" (IV, 3). There, when all the soliloquizers have arrived, Dumain is unconscious of the presence of his hidden comrades, Longaville conscious only of Dumain, the king conscious of the other two, and Biron alone, the first on the stage, comprehends the whimsical situation, that they are "four woodcocks in a dish." A similar scheme, but not so elaborated, occurs in "Fair Em" (pr. before 1619), there being three soliloquizing lovers two of whom are successively overheard.<sup>51</sup>

Shakespeare employs the overheard soliloquy of an individual, as well as of a group, for comic purposes, Malvolio's rumination on his rimed missive (II, 5), like the ponderings of the love-sick swains on their sonnets in "Love's Labors Lost," is audible to everybody on the stage. Indeed, it is because Malvolio is overheard that the scene is one of the most laughable in Shakespearean comedy. By this means, Malvolio is shown to nibble and eventually to swallow the bait, to the uproarious delight of the eavesdroppers, whose hilarity, evidenced in conspicuous by-play, as well as asides, is quickly communicated to the audience. The same contrivance is employed in "All's Well," when Parolles lays bare his fears to the immense satisfaction of the listening conspirators, who interrupt with ironic rejoinders by way of asides and finally terminate his meditations by seizing and blindfolding him (IV, 2, 27-70). The device makes possible a comic situation of an entirely different nature in "The First Part of Henry the Fourth," when the elegy pronounced by Prince Hal over the supposedly dead Falstaff is overheard by that worthy (V, 4, 102-110). Unless the actor impersonating Falstaff should take the liberty of indulging in a surreptitious grimace, the fun is not apparent during the prince's speech, but it explodes in the first word of the ensuing monolog by Falstaff: "Em-bowell'd!"

The soliloquizer who is overheard may be the center of a

<sup>51</sup> Simpson's *School of Shakespeare*, Vol. II, p. 418 ff.

tragic as well as of a comic situation. The king's monologic account of himself in "The Third Part of Henry the Sixth" (III, 1) discloses his identity to the lurking keepers, who seize him a prisoner; and a sentry and his company stealthily listen to the dying words of Enobarbus ("Antony and Cleopatra," IV, 9). In Dryden's adaptation of the tragedy, "All for Love," he omits this overheard soliloquy, but he inserts two equally prominent ones of his own.<sup>52</sup>

The romantic situation, like the tragic, takes advantage of the device, for the purpose of imparting information to the eavesdropper. In "All's Well," the Countess learns that her son is the object of Helena's affection through the Steward's report of Helena's soliloquy which he has overheard: "Madam, I was very late more near her than I think she wish'd me. Alone she was, and did communicate to herself her own words to her own ears; she thought, I dare vow for her, they touch'd not any stranger sense. Her matter was, she lov'd your son" (I, 3, 110-126). Here is a frank statement of the convention which is used no less obviously but with a nicer regard for romantic suspense in the balcony scene of "Romeo and Juliet" (II, 2). There Romeo, listening to his love's meditations, asks himself, "Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?"

The overheard soliloquy is rare in Sanskrit drama, but there is one instance of it in a romantic setting. Vatsa in the "Ratnāvalī" joyously anticipates meeting his sweetheart,<sup>53</sup> and, while he is soliloquizing, Vasantaka enters with the lady, and, overhearing him, observes to her, "Lady Śāgarikā, I hear my friend muttering to himself his anxiety for your appearance." Roman comedy is replete with overheard soliloquies. "Did you hear me?" asks Megadorus in the "Aulularia" of Plautus (III, 10) after indulging in a long monolog. "Everything from the very beginning," responds Euclio. Sometimes the soliloquy is only partially overheard,<sup>54</sup> and sometimes merely the voice is heard.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Furness Variorum Edition of *Antony and Cleopatra*, pp. 417, 447.

<sup>53</sup> *Select Specimens of the Hindu Drama*, Vol. II, p. 296.

<sup>54</sup> Terence, pp. 30, 342, 216.

<sup>55</sup> Plautus, Vol. I, pp. 195, 202, 417; Vol. II, p. 74.

A curious by-product of the overheard soliloquy in Roman comedy, with survivals in France and Italy,<sup>86</sup> is the feigned soliloquy. The contrivance is both simple and ludicrous: A is on the stage, B enters; A pretends to soliloquize about the misfortunes of B, or on some other subject of vital interest to B, who, notwithstanding his frantic efforts to learn the truth, is ignored for some time by A. Shakespeare makes use of the device denuded of its Roman eccentricities when Edmund of "Lear" pretends to meditate on the eclipses for the benefit of the approaching Edgar, who inquires, "How now, brother Edmund! what serious contemplation are you in?" (I, 2, 150).

Such intricacies, however, are not favored by the English drama. Indeed the overheard soliloquy does not gain its vogue until the advent of foreign influence, although it exists independently in a crude form. For example, Mercy in the morality "Mankind" concludes a hortative monolog with the adjuration, "I besech you hertyly have this premedytacyone," whereupon Mischief enters, evidently overhearing the last words, as he rejoins, "I besech you hertyly, leve yower calculacyon!"<sup>87</sup> "Damon and Pythias" (1564?) contains an overheard soliloquy,<sup>88</sup> for the first time boldly set forth after the manner of Roman comedy. The device flourishes in English pastoral drama—notably in Fletcher's "Faithful Shepherdess"<sup>89</sup>—but it is conspicuously absent in the continental models, Tasso's "Aminta" and Guarini's "Pastor Fido." For more than three hundred years, the overheard soliloquy has been occasionally utilized in English drama, but during the past century, its popularity has been largely confined to melodrama. In fact, one of the earliest representatives of the *mélodrame* in England, Holcroft's translation called "A Tale

<sup>86</sup> Plautus, Vol. II, pp. 15, 262; Terence, pp. 47, 121; Molière, *L'Amour Medecin*, I, 6; *Les Fourberies de Scapin*, II, 7; Guarini's *Il Pastor Fido*, translated by Sir Richard Fanshawe, p. 98.

<sup>87</sup> Manly, Vol. I, p. 317. Cf. exactly parallel instances in Sidney Grundy, cited by H. M. Paull, in "Dramatic Convention with Special Reference to the Soliloquy," *Fortnightly Review*, May, 1899, p. 865.

<sup>88</sup> Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, Vol. IX, p. 34.

<sup>89</sup> Mermaid edition, pp. 335, 351, 358, 398.

of *Mystery*" (1802), contains a soliloquy overheard by the lurking villain.<sup>60</sup>

The convention of the overheard soliloquy in England, doubtless largely due to the example of Shakespeare, has always been a simple affair: A is talking aloud and B overhears what he says. In Roman and French comedy, the soliloquy partially overheard or wholly pretended often distorts the device beyond the semblance of reality. Yet Molière, who sometimes utilizes its most extreme forms, has a conception of the soliloquy as a symbol of thought, and twice he seeks to harmonize this idea with that of the overheard soliloquy. Harpagon ("L'Avare," I, 4), like Autolycus, fears that his monolog has betrayed him, but, unlike the Shakespearean character, he attempts to explain why he has been talking aloud: "Je crois que j'ai parlé haut en raisonnant tout seul." In "Scapin," Molière again apologizes for the phenomenon. While Argante is soliloquizing (I, 4), the eavesdropping Scapin remarks in an apart, "Il a déjà appris l'affaire, et elle lui tient si fort en tête, que tout seul il en parle haut."

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Joanna Baillie is confronted with the same dilemma: how can thought be overheard? In her "Orra" (I, 2), she gives practically the same solution as Molière's. Cathrina interrupts the soliloquizer with, "Ha, speakest thou to thyself?"

"RUDOLF (starting). I did not speak.

CATHRINA. Thou didst; thy busy mind gave sound to thoughts  
Which thou didst utter with a quick, harsh voice,  
Like one who speaks in sleep."

Shelley's apology in the mouth of Cenci only emphasizes the incongruity of the paradox:

"I think they cannot hear me at that door;  
What if they should? And yet I need not speak,  
Though the heart triumphs with itself in words.  
O thou most silent air, that shalt not hear  
What now I think!" (I, 1).

Shakespeare never allows the antithesis between thought and speech to become evident in his overheard soliloquies, and con-

<sup>60</sup> Published by R. Phillips, London, 1802, p. 42.



sequently he avoids the artistic blunders of the apologists. For him the overheard soliloquy is always speech, and nowhere does he show a finer appreciation of technical values than in the balcony scene where Romeo and Juliet both frankly accept the soliloquy as spoken. "She speaks!" exclaims Romeo, "O speak again, bright angel!" and Juliet is not surprised that her "counsel" has been overheard. The nearest approach to an apology for the device in the works attributed to Shakespeare is in the scene in "Titus Andronicus" (III, 1) in which Lucius remonstrates with Titus for having apostrophized the stones as tribunes, and the afflicted man strives to justify the outbreak, asserting that he prefers to address stones rather than tribunes. Here, as usual, however, Shakespeare leaves no doubt that the overheard soliloquy is speech. Indeed his use of the contrivance is both consistent and effective. It is true that the critic of today may be disturbed by the palpable artifice of the climactic situation of "Love's Labor's Lost," or by the theatrical manipulation of the death of Enobarbus; but even the sophisticated modern must admit that the convention of the overheard soliloquy in "Romeo and Juliet" adds an exquisite touch to one of the most romantic episodes in drama, and that in "Twelfth Night" it is the very foundation of one of the merriest scenes in English comedy.

#### THE SOLILOQUY AS A CONVENTION OF STRUCTURE

In estimating the value of the Shakespearean soliloquy as a structural device, it is manifestly unfair to apply modern standards. The stage of today has eliminated the need of the monologs treated in this and the preceding chapter. The drop curtain and arrangements for ingress and egress on three sides of the stage have removed the requirements of entrance and exit speeches; and the pause, occasionally with an empty stage, has largely supplanted the link. Again, recent lighting and scenic effects have made explanations of "business" less necessary than formerly; and these improvements, together with the picture-frame proscenium, have given an air of verisimilitude to the performance which renders absurd, as Pro-

fessor Brander Matthews<sup>61</sup> has shown, the artifice of the overheard soliloquy and the exposition monolog. All of these devices are freely employed by Elizabethan dramatists and accepted by their public without cavil, because their platform stage makes possible an intimate relation between actors and auditors and so naturally fosters the structural monolog as a convention.

"The soliloquy is simply a convention of the theatric art, the result of an implied contract between those before the curtain and those behind it."<sup>61</sup> Owing to this tacit agreement between playwright and public, the prolog and the initial soliloquy are used as a means of exposition in the early drama of Greece, India and China, as well as of modern nations. In classical drama, the chorus and the messenger often perform the function; and in the plays of the classicists—notably of seventeenth century France—the confidant furnishes an excuse for long monologic narratives. The soliloquy has been a favorite method of exposition in England until recently. Now that the audience rejects this convention, the modern playwright, following the technic of Ibsen, has skillfully revived the confidant,—not, however, the classicist companion whose sole duty is listening. The new confidant, observes a writer in "The Saturday Review,"<sup>62</sup> "is endowed with a *locus standi* in the form of a character and a real connection with the plot. . . . To him are often confided things which in real life would be confided to no one. The confiding of such things to him is an offence against fundamental reality, whereas the confiding of them through soliloquy is but an offence against reality of surface. It should be easier, in such cases, to accept soliloquy as a conventional substitute for silent thought than to accept confidence as an actual substitute." This ingenious defence of the exposition monolog is remarkable today when the device is almost unanimously tabooed, and, as we have already noted, it is unusual in the criticism of other periods. The position, however, is not unique, as it has been emphatically maintained by so astute a critic as M. Jules Lemaitre. "C'est une convention

<sup>61</sup> "Concerning the Soliloquy," *Putnam's Monthly*, Nov., 1906, p. 184.

<sup>62</sup> Dec. 7, 1901, p. 710.

nécessaire," he asserts. "Il n'y a pas de meilleur moyen de nous faire connaître ce qu'un personnage ne peut, avec vraisemblance, dire à d'autres."<sup>63</sup>

Criticism of the structural soliloquy has been almost exclusively confined to its most important form, the exposition monolog, although the equally conspicuous but less frequent overheard soliloquy has had its share of attention. D'Aubignac condemns it, citing the authority of Scaliger;<sup>64</sup> and, notwithstanding the explanations which poets have advanced in its behalf, it has been subjected to disapproval and ridicule, whenever discussed. It is remarkable, moreover, that these two classes of structural soliloquies are the only ones, so far as I know, which have received the critical recognition which is due them. The monologic accompaniment of "business," the entrance speech and the exit tag have been practically ignored, while the link has been discussed only in foreign criticism,<sup>65</sup> and the overheard soliloquy and the exposition monolog have been reviewed, for the most part, on the question of their being natural. "Neither soliloquy nor the use of verse can be condemned on the mere ground that they are unnatural," Professor Bradley<sup>66</sup> observes with acumen. "No dramatic language is natural; all dramatic language is idealized. So that the question as to the soliloquy must be one as to the degree of idealization and the balance of advantages and disadvantages."

Clearly Shakespeare's vindication lies in the advantages of the soliloquy as a factor in the technic of his time. He finds the various manifestations of the convention, and he avails himself of them, using with especial frequency the exposition monolog, the link and the exit speech. He adds nothing to their intricacy, but, only in exceptional cases, is he satisfied with the obviously utilitarian soliloquy. Unconsciously, perhaps, but none the less effectually, he performs a dual service: first, he borrows the device from his contemporaries and fits it

<sup>63</sup> *Impressions de Théâtre*, première série, p. 306.

<sup>64</sup> *Whole Art of the Stage*, p. 58.

<sup>65</sup> See *ante*, p. 83.

<sup>66</sup> *Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 72.

into the framework of his piece; and then he beautifies it with his magic touch. "Now is the winter of our discontent," "Boy Lucius! Fast asleep?" "Words without thoughts never to heaven go,"—these are respectively exposition monolog, link and exit speech, which, for distinction, music and feeling are unparalleled outside of Shakespeare. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that structural monologs are secondary in importance to the great soliloquies of comedy and tragedy which constitute the theme for the remainder of this investigation.

## CHAPTER V

### SHAKESPEARE'S USE OF THE COMIC MONOLOG

Like nearly every other part of Elizabethan drama, the comic monolog is the product of both classical and native traditions, which appear almost perfectly blended in the usage of Shakespeare. It seems a far cry from the narration of the Plautine puppet, on the one hand, and the recitation of the medieval buffoon, on the other, to the matchless soliloquies of Falstaff and Benedick; but there are lines of development from those divergent sources which culminate in Shakespeare's brilliant creations. To be sure, the Shakespearean monolog is usually inferior, in technic and spirit, to the famous meditations of Benedick and Falstaff, but, as Dr. Johnson observes, "it is no more to be required that wit should always be blazing, than that the sun should always stand at noon." Indeed, the variety of Shakespeare's comic soliloquies is one of their most interesting features; but, nevertheless, they fall naturally into groups, the basis of classification being the nature of the speaker rather than the content of the speech.

There are seven conspicuous kinds of comic monologists in Shakespeare: the clown, the drunkard, the fantastic, the cuckold, the rogue, the braggart and the cynic. The few remaining soliloquizers are distinct from the rest in their humorous efforts at serious meditation, and, since they have the introspective attitude in common, they may be styled analysts. Many of these types, as their names suggest, have illustrious predecessors, whom we shall note, while investigating in detail Shakespeare's method and accomplishment.

#### THE CLOWN

The monolog of the clown has no precise analog in classic comedy. The narrative of the Plautine servant usually discloses him more of a sharper than a buffoon. Perhaps he is most akin to the Elizabethan clown in the long discourse of

Sosia which opens "Amphitryon." His rehearsal of the Theban victory, preliminary to announcing it to his mistress, is given a touch of amusing realism by Molière when he has the mistress impersonated by Sosia's lantern. This device of representing people by inanimate objects is ludicrously carried out, it will be remembered, in Launce's first monolog ("Two Gentlemen of Verona," II, 3, 1, 35).

The important ancestor of the Shakespearean clown is doubtless the strolling entertainer of medieval England, and, although no direct relation can be shown to exist between his monolog and that of the Roman mime,<sup>1</sup> it is interesting to observe that there probably was a remote historical prototype. "Originally," says Mr. E. K. Chambers,<sup>2</sup> "the mimes seem to have performed in monologs, and the action of their pieces continued to be dominated by a single personage." The form of entertainment sometimes designated as "Horatian comedy,"<sup>3</sup> consisting of a story told in one or more monologs and illustrated by characters in action, flourished during the twelfth century. The "elegiac" and "epic" tragedies and comedies of the period, often derived from Terence, were, according to Dr. Cloetta,<sup>4</sup> "intended for a half-dramatic declamation by minstrels." It is of interest that these monologic narratives often contain direct quotations of dialog,—a device used with tragic force in "Richard the Third,"<sup>5</sup> and with comic effect in the monologs of Launce and Launcelot Gobbo.

In Italy the folk drama has its beginning in monolog, without the customary preliminary step of song,<sup>6</sup> while in France, during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, there are two *genres* of popular recitations, the *sermon joyeux* and the *monologue*. The word "monolog," it may be observed in this connection, probably originated in seventeenth century France.<sup>7</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> P. S. Allen, "The Medieval Mimus," *Modern Philology*, Jan., 1910, Vol. VII, No. 3, p. 329 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Medieval Stage*, Vol. I, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Geschichte des Neueren Dramas*, by W. Creizenach, Vol. I, p. 42.

<sup>4</sup> "Beitrage zur Litteratur," quoted by E. K. Chambers, *Medieval Stage*, Vol. II, p. 213.

<sup>5</sup> See *ante*, p. 64, and compare with p. 128 of this chapter.

<sup>6</sup> Creizenach, Vol. I, p. 312.

<sup>7</sup> Creizenach, Vol. II, p. 287, note 2.

French *monologue*, inheriting some of the broadly farcical traditions of the *fabliau*, consists of "a scene for one person, in which the actor plays a true rôle . . . a complete comedy put in a limited framework."<sup>8</sup> For mirth-provoking ingenuity, some of these pieces—the celebrated "Franc-archer de Bagnolet," for example—compare favorably with the monolog of the Shakespearean clown at his best. It was only a step to the introduction of dialog,<sup>9</sup> and the probabilities are, as M. Lintilhac<sup>10</sup> states them, that "there was emulation and very likely filiation between the dramatic *monologue* and the farce" of France.

It seems equally probable, although even more difficult to prove, that the stroller of medieval England left his impress on the comic monologs of subsequent drama. One may reasonably conjecture that the minstrel included in his repertory the kind of boisterous appeals to the crowd which survive in the monologs of the Vice of miracles, moralities, interludes, and early comedies and tragedies. In all of these species, the monolog of the clown, usually known as the Vice, presents certain well defined characteristics. He is a roisterer who blusteringly accosts the audience and cracks some jokes for their amusement. Indeed, the address to the audience is so intimately associated with the comic monolog, particularly with that of the clown, that it seems advisable to make a slight digression at this juncture, in order to ascertain the historical and technical relation of the phenomenon to the Shakespearean soliloquy.

The parabasis of Aristophanes and the prolog of Plautus and Terence are monologic addresses to the audience. In fact, the so-called soliloquies of these masters, almost invariably conversational in tone, tacitly imply the presence of hearers. On rare occasions, Plautus has his monologist accost the spectators, for the purpose of emphasizing the exposition. Thus Stephanius, in "Stichus" (IV, 3), proclaims, "I wish it to appear

<sup>8</sup> "Le monologue dramatique dans l'ancien théâtre Français," by Émile Picot, *Romania*, Vol. XV, p. 358.

<sup>9</sup> Picot, *Romania*, Vol. XV, p. 361.

<sup>10</sup> *La comédie moyen âge et renaissance*, p. 203.

wondrous to none of you, Spectators, why I who live there (pointing) am come out hither from this other house: I'll inform you thereon."<sup>11</sup> Once, in the "Aulularia" (V, 2), he makes a sensational use of the device, when Euclio, raging over the loss of his treasure, cries, "I beseech you, give me your aid, and point me out the person that has taken it away. What's the matter? Why do you laugh?" He proceeds to interrogate one of the spectators. Molière, adapting this monolog in "L'Avare" (IV, 7) does not dispense with the direct address.

Foreign adaptations in early English drama make conspicuous use of the device. "Calisto and Melibaea" (1516-33), from the Spanish through the Italian, contains many long monologs rhetorical, expository and lamenting, but almost always, even when serious, they are spoken directly to the audience. Translations from the neo-Latin, such as "Thersites" (1537 c.) and "The Disobedient Child" (1560 c.), have monologs accosting the spectators directly and indirectly. Likewise, the comedies built on classical models, such as "Roister Doister" (1552 c.) and "Jack Juggler" (1553-8 c.), freely avail themselves of the contrivance.

As we have observed, in all forms of early English drama, the clownish monologist, generally appearing as the Vice, salutes his auditors. Garcio, "a mery lad" of the Towneley miracle on the killing of Abel, greets the spectators with an "All hale!," adjures them to make no noise, informs them, "Gedlyngis, I am a fulle grete wat," and departs with a "ffarwell, for I am gone."<sup>12</sup> In "Like Will to Like" (pr. 1568), Nichol Newfangle presents the knave of clubs to a man in the audience with the jovial remark, "Like unto like."<sup>13</sup> Ambidexter, the Vice of "Cambises" (S. R. 1569-70), not only gives a dissertation on his name,<sup>14</sup> but he also has a number of roistering monologs addressed directly to his hearers.<sup>15</sup> On one occasion, he pretends to single out a girl of the audience:

<sup>11</sup> Vol. I, p. 246. Cf. Vol. I, pp. 201, 282; Vol. II, pp. 214, 231.

<sup>12</sup> *Townley Plays*, E. E. T. S., Extra Series, Vol. LXXI, p. 9.

<sup>13</sup> *The Dramatic Writings of Ulpian Fulwell*, edited by J. S. Farmer, p. 4.

<sup>14</sup> Manly, Vol. II, p. 168.

<sup>15</sup> Pp. 173, 189, 191.



"How say you, maid, to mary me wil ye be glad?"<sup>16</sup> Such methods for causing laughter are not unknown in modern vaudeville.

From the examples cited, it is evident that there is a certain distinction between the salutations of the monologists of Roman comedy and of early English drama. Plautus sometimes addresses the spectators, for the purpose of elucidating or of emphasizing the plot, while the English buffoon is wont to greet his audience with no other purpose than that of jesting. With the advent of classical influence, there are a few instances of the direct address for the sake of imparting information. For example, Mathew Merygreeke's simple statement:

"But now of Roister Doister somewhat to expresse,  
That ye may esteeme him after his worthinesse!" (I, 1).

The frequent monologic narratives and commentaries of Diccon, the "Bedlem" of "Gammer Gurton," have a distinctively native tang, although in length and content they show classical influence. Diccon's manner of addressing the audience is a favorite one with subsequent clowns: "Ye see, masters, that one end tapt of this my short devise!" he observes (II, 3), and again: "Now, sirs, do you no more, but kepe my counsaile juste" (III, 3). The Elizabethan clown always assumes that he is addressing his hearers, and occasionally he signifies the fact with a jovial vocative, such as "masters" or "sirs."

Clowns in the extant dramas of Shakespeare's immediate predecessors are by no means numerous. Miles of Greene's "Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay" (1598 c.) has two sprightly monologs in which he calls the audience "sir" (sc. XI, XV). Raffe's playful account of the astronomer's mishap, in Lyly's "Gallathea" (pr. 1592) (V, 1), is guiltless of vocatives, although the story is obviously told to the auditors. The nearest approach to a comic soliloquy in Marlowe is the speech in "Doctor Faustus" (1588?) in which the Horse-Courser explains to the spectators how he got wet (sc. XI). Typical monologs of the clown, with a suggestion of the native fun of Shakespeare, occur in "Mucedorus" (pr. 1598)<sup>17</sup> and in

<sup>16</sup> P. 199.

<sup>17</sup> Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, Vol. VII, pp. 208, 234.

"Englishmen for my Money" (1598 c.) (III, 1), both speaking to the bystanders collectively as "sirrah."

Although the diction of all of Shakespeare's clowns is conversational, only Launce directly addresses the audience. He uses the conventional "sir" (II, 3, 21), and he has a mannerism of exclaiming, "Look you" (III, 1, 261, 276; IV, 4, 2). He says to his auditors, "I'll show you the manner of it" (II, 3, 15), and again he frankly assures them, "You shall judge" (IV, 4, 18). Aside from these remarks, there are surprisingly few direct appeals to the audience in Shakespeare. At rare intervals, Falstaff uses the second person,<sup>18</sup> but unobtrusively. Thisbe's farewell to her friends in "A Midsummer-Night's Dream" (V, 1, 352) may be interpreted as referring to the onlookers, but, if so, it is excusable as a burlesque of such absurdities as the exhortation of the audience by the dying Cambises.<sup>19</sup>

An indictment may be brought against Shakespeare's art, however, in the case of Petruchio's soliloquy ("Taming of the Shrew," IV, 1, 191-214). The dramatist weakens the speech by terminating it with a jocular appeal to the hearers, a conclusion evidently tacked on, since it does not appear in the original "A Shrew."<sup>20</sup> This tag, almost epilogic, suggests the analogy of the Elizabethan epilog, usually spoken by one of the players directly to the audience.

"He that knows better how to tame a shrew,  
Now let him speak; 'tis charity to show,"

cries Petruchio as he leaves the stage.

The abrupt pointing of the moral of the action, quite possibly the outgrowth of the tradition of the hortative monolog of the morality, is by no means unusual in Elizabethan times. Young Arthur of "How a Man May Choose a Good Wife from a Bad" demands, "What husband here but would wish such a wife?"<sup>21</sup> There are many such admonitions to a class

<sup>18</sup> *The Second Part of Henry the Fourth*, V, 1, 93; *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, III, 5, 11.

<sup>19</sup> See *ante*, p. 78.

<sup>20</sup> See *ante*, p. 32.

<sup>21</sup> Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, Vol. IX, p. 87.

of the audience. Parolles has a word of warning for him "who knows himself a braggart" ("All's Well," IV, 4, 370), and Posthumus admonishes "you married ones" ("Cymbeline," V, 1, 2). Likewise, Heywood's *Mistress Frankford*<sup>22</sup> and *Jane Shore*<sup>23</sup> both urge the women of the audience to profit by their sad examples.

Specific adjurations of this nature almost imperceptibly merge into apostrophes to the absent, and the two are not always easily distinguished. For example, the speeches by Parolles and Posthumus just mentioned might be considered as generalizations independent of the audience. Again, Othello's "Look, where she comes" (III, 3, 277) and similarly prepared entrances<sup>24</sup> lost their significance before Shakespeare used them, although perhaps they were originally intended for the spectators.

It may appear that undue attention has been given the address to the audience, since, manifestly, the soliloquy, which is a speaking alone, cannot be spoken to others. However, it must be borne in mind that the comic soliloquy evolves from the buffoon's monologic greeting to the spectators, modified by the discursive narrative soliloquy of classical comedy, itself not free from the direct address. Shakespeare's usage exhibits the transition of the monolog from the funny story told the audience to the laughable revelation of the soliloquizer's inmost thoughts and emotions. Professors Kilian, Bradley and Johnson agree that Shakespeare's soliloquies "are in some cases too evidently addressed to the audience, thus putting the player in an inartistic relation to them and taking him out of the character for the moment."<sup>25</sup> The fact is incontestable, but the wonder is that there are so few instances. Petruchio and Falstaff are mild offenders, while the clown Launce is the only Shakespearean monologist who conspicuously uses the direct address.

Whether the monolog of the Shakespearean clown takes the

<sup>22</sup> *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, IV, 6.

<sup>23</sup> *King Edward IV*, Part II, IV, 3.

<sup>24</sup> See *ante*, p. 55.

<sup>25</sup> *Shakespeare and his Critics*, by C. F. Johnson, p. 376.

form of narration, characterization, lamentation or philosophizing, it shows the dual heritage of classicism and medievalism. Launce's stories have something of the classic in being lengthy narratives, but in theme they are as racy and indigenous as folk tale or *fabliau*. Like nearly all other comic monologs, Launce's are complete in themselves and practically independent of the rest of the performance. His account of the parting (II, 3, 1-35) is as ludicrously dramatic as the French *monologue* at its best. The fun arises not only from the absurdity of the "business," but also from the preliminary casting of parts. Dr. Johnson, commenting on Sir Thomas Hamme's emendation for the sake of rationalizing the tangle beginning, "I am the dog," pertinently observes, "This certainly is more reasonable, but I know not how much reason the author intended to bestow on Launce's soliloquy." Launce's anecdotes concerning his dog (IV, 4, 1-42) doubtless made a strong appeal to the Elizabethan audience because of their vulgarity, but the taste of all ages must succumb to the droll humor resulting from the master's unrequited devotion to his cur.

In the class of clownish narration may be included Bottom's disjointed account of his dream ("A Midsummer-Night's Dream," IV, 1, 203-224), the fun springing from the incompleteness of the discourse. "Methought I was,—and methought I had,—" Bottom's reticence is in itself an inducement to laughter, as the audience can readily supply the omissions. The absurdity of the monolog is enhanced by the incorrect combination of subject and predicate—"the eye of man hath not heard," and so forth—a trick used elsewhere in the piece for ludicrous effect (III, 1, 93; V, 1, 194).

Analyzing the fun of Shakespeare's soliloquies may seem very much like breaking the traditional butterfly upon the wheel, but, if not pushed to an extreme, the laboratory method is perhaps the most satisfactory test of the playwright's technic. In the matter of clownish characterization, the results are chiefly negligible. To be sure, Costard's bits of portraiture in fantastic phraseology ("Love's Labor's Lost," IV, 1, 142, 151) have an element of humor in the speaker's assumed supe-

riority, as well as in his linguistic foppishness. Launce's monolog on his sweetheart (III, 1, 261-278) is somewhat funny because of his negative manner of divulging his love and his lack of characterization in the items describing the lady. On the other hand, the cataloging of the striking qualities of Bardolph, Pistol and Nym by the Boy in "Henry the Fifth" (III, 2, 28-57), and his further comment on Pistol in contrast with the other two worthies (IV, 5, 70-82) are difficult to construe as amusing, except in the fact that the remarks are made by a precocious small boy. The lad is not a clown, but his monologs fall in line with other clownish characterizations, such as the list of prisoners given by Pompey, the clown of "Measure for Measure" (IV, 3, 1-21), another supposedly humorous speech. The most ludicrous delineation of character in Shakespearean soliloquy is Falstaff's inimitable description of Justice Shallow ("The Second Part of Henry the Fourth," III, 2, 323-357); but Falstaff is far from being a clown, and all of his soliloquies will presently be treated together as a study of his personality. Again, Launcelot Gobbo's ruminations ("The Merchant of Venice," II, 2, 1-33) are unquestionably those of a clown, but they are reserved for consideration in connection with the subject of comic introspection.

The clownish monologists have many subjects for their remarks. Costard philosophizes on the magic word "remuneration" (III, 1, 136-144). The servant Grumio of "The Taming of the Shrew" laments the annoyances of his lot (IV, 1, 1-11). This is a conventional theme for the soliloquizing servants of Roman comedy, and a similar instance occurs in the "Śākuntalā" of Kālidāsa, when Māthavya, the emperor's buffoon, complains of the life of the hunter which has been forced upon him. In "Romeo and Juliet," the clown-servant makes an elaborate statement of his inability to read (I, 2, 38-45), creating amusement in Bottom's style by the wrong collocation of words. Trinculo's droll attempt to classify Caliban (II, 2, 17-43) is capped with the memorable saw, "Misery acquaints a man with strange bedfellows." The doggerel "prophecy" of the Fool in "Lear" (III, 28, 79-95) is awkwardly intro-

duced and nonsensically terminated, and, indeed, has no excuse for being. It is unquestionably spurious.<sup>26</sup>

To complete the miscellaneous collection of monologs by Shakespearean clowns, one more should be added, a little comment by Mistress Quickly in "The Merry Wives" (III, 4, 105-115). Mistress Quickly is really a she-clown, and her soliloquy is funny chiefly because of her guileless duplicity: she swears to do everything in her power for all three suitors,— "for so I have promised, and I'll be as good as my word." It is not surprising to find in Mistress Quickly's monolog a malapropism—"speciously" for "especially,"—since she is addicted to this form of discourse; but it is noteworthy that the device is often employed by Shakespeare. Costard's "obscenely" (IV, 1, 145) is intentionally misapplied, while other instances are afforded by Launce's "prodigious son" (II, 3, 4) and Launcelot Gobbo's "devil incarnation" (II, 2, 28).

But the verbal confusion of the Shakespearean clown, as a factor for producing mirth, is subordinate to his psychological confusion. Trinculo's fear of the storm, together with his perplexity as to the classification of the fish-like monster, Launcelot Gobbo's uncertainty as to whether to budge or no, and Bottom's amazement at his dream,—these states of mind are essentially comic. Previously, the buffoon had created amusement by his bluster, word-play, jingles or the recounting of an anecdote, but his speech had scarcely a trace of individuality: he was merely a clown. Shakespeare, retaining the clown as a stock figure, adds a vitalizing touch of human nature. Launce is an illustration. Not only is fresh ingenuity given to the conventional story-teller, but further he is endowed with a ruling passion, his devotion to his dog. Thus the monologs of Launce, although farcical, are infused with the spirit of comedy.

#### THE DRUNKARD

Allied with the broadly farcical effect of the clown's monolog is that of the drunkard. Indeed, clowns and drunkards in real life are wont to mutter incoherently to themselves, and hence there is an exceptional degree of verisimilitude in their stage

<sup>26</sup> A. C. Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 452.

soliloquies. From Plautus and Terence to the so-called musical comedies of our day, the drunken monologist has been a favorite with the groundlings. The intoxicated Pseudolus, in the play by Plautus of that name (V, 1), gives a lengthy account of the wanton feast he has been enjoying, and he introduces a dance, saying that wine has laid hold of his feet. Chremes, in the "Eunuchus" of Terence (IV, 6), also admits that wine is too much for his feet.

Shakespeare's Stephano proclaims his intoxication by recourse to the bottle, as he observes, "Here's my comfort" ("The Tempest," II, 2, 47, 57). By way of a specialty, he enters singing a "scurvy tune." His surprise upon discovering the four-legged monster is tempered by the wine which warms him, and accordingly his emotions are sufficiently differentiated from those of Trinculo, whose monolog immediately precedes. It is perhaps worthy of note that "Trinculo drunk, but something recovered" is assigned a vulgar monolog in "Albumazar" (V, 8), a play which was acted in 1614. There is nothing Shakespearean about the speech, except the name and condition of the speaker, but these items seem to attest a certain popularity of the episode in "The Tempest."

No such enduring notoriety has attached to the trifling interlude by Stephano, however, as has been lavished upon the monolog of the Porter in "Macbeth" (II, 3, 1-23). Stephano's song and remarks, like the dance and talk of Pseudolus, merely constitute amusement for a moment, with no ulterior significance: but the Porter's speech interrupts a scene of tense tragedy. Herein lies its fame, its opprobrium and its power. The position of the monolog is its important feature. The murder is committed, and straightway the knocking begins. The moment of keen suspense is prolonged and augmented to the point of hysteria by the appearance and maunderings of the drunkard. His words, almost drowned by the hubbub at the gate, are of minor consequence. It is his dramaturgic duty to accentuate the theatrical effect of the knocking. Eleven times he uses the word "knock"; what does the knocking mean? DeQuincey has well depicted its sinister and porten-

tous fascination, while Joseph Jefferson<sup>27</sup> has emphasized its dramaturgic significance.

"Comic relief" is the popular catch-word interpretation of the Porter's speech; perhaps "comic intensification" would be slightly more suggestive of its function. The observations of the drowsy drunkard, imagining himself the porter of hell-gate, and welcoming in his maudlin fancy the farmer, the Jesuit equivocator and the tailor, with accompanying local hits,—these are boisterously farcical in themselves; and, because of this fact, they serve to intensify the lurid tragedy of the situation. No one understands better than Shakespeare the dramatic value of the quick emotional shift. Like the gravedigger's scene of "Hamlet," the Porter's monolog is a grotesque contrast, nevertheless harmonizing with the tragic theme. This Porter of hell-gate is in reality the door-keeper of a castle which has just been rendered a hell by the perpetration of a hideous crime, and the criminals have started on "the primrose way to the everlasting bonfire." Whether this symbolism is coincidental or intentional, it is impossible to ascertain, but it has not entirely escaped the critics.

Criticism of the passage ranges from condemnation to laudation. A glance at some of the most notable commentaries collected in the Furness Variorum edition (pp. 109-110) shows the variety of opinion. Capell puts the scene on a utilitarian basis, stating that its purpose is to allow time for Macbeth to wash his hands and change his dress. Coleridge, excepting only a slight touch, and the Clarendon editors, *in toto*, pronounce the episode spurious. Scholarly opinion to-day, however, with comparative unanimity, reverses the decision. Heraud styles the scene an admirable transition, while Clarke voices the consensus of modern thought: "Its repulsively coarse humor serves powerfully to contrast, yet harmonize, with the crime that has been perpetrated."

#### THE FANTASTIC

Unlike the drunkard and the clown, the fantastic lover is a sporadic growth. He is the product of humanism in some of

<sup>27</sup> *Autobiography*, p. 187.



its eccentric social and literary aspects, such as the cults of Ciceronian eloquence and Platonic gallantry. Lovers have soliloquized in the literature of all peoples and ages, but never with the rhetorical fervor of the renaissance sonnet, novella and pastoral comedy. In the England of the second half of the sixteenth century, the flourishing of the Petrarchistic sonnet and the Italian novella fostered the extravagantly romantic soliloquy, and the vogue of Euphuism gave it its phraseology. The early plays of Lyly abound in extravagant and Euphuistic soliloquies of lovers. For example, Phao's lament in "Sapho and Phao" (II, 4) expresses by aid of Euphuistic similes, ecstatic reverie on love and the beloved, but there is no hint that the soliloquizer is conscious that he is fantastic. Accordingly, although a spirit of playfulness pervades his diction, his soliloquy must be classed as romantic rather than comic.

Not so the fantasts of "Love's Labors Lost": they rejoice in their whimsicality, making a jest of seriousness, and, moreover, their soliloquies sound a note of sincerity absent in Lyly. Don Armado's outburst (I, 2, 172-191) is heated, grandiloquent and playful, his word-play including technical terms of self-defense, as well as classical and Biblical allusions. The mock heroic apostrophes of his peroration, "Adieu, valor! rust, rapier! be still, drum! for your manager is in love; yea, he loveth,"—are paralleled in the soliloquy of Frank concluding the first act of "The Fair Maid of the Exchange" (pr. 1607): "Therefore, hat-band, avaunt! ruff, regard yourself! garters, adieu! shoe-string—so and so! I am a poor enamorate and enforced with the poet to say, *love overcomes all, and I that love obey.*" The early part of Frank's soliloquy, in which he inventories his lady's defects as well as her points of beauty, is not dissimilar to the lament of Biron (III, 1, 175-207), who whimsically rails not only against Dan Cupid and woman but also the beauty of his mistress,

"A whitely wanton with a velvet brow,  
With two pitch-balls stuck in her face for eyes."

As Biron's speech verges on a parody of the conventional soliloquy, so Petruchio's soliloquies are comically analogous to

those of the plotting villain. Before he meets his Kate, he carefully plots his conversation with her (II, I, 169-182).

"Say that she rail, why then I'll tell her plain  
She sings as sweetly as a nightingale,"—

thus he begins to lay his plans. When he has his victim in his power, with villainous glee he exults over the tortures he has inflicted on her, and he plots future devilry for the accomplishment of his design (IV, I, 191-214). Were it not for the underlying spirit of farcical exaggeration, these ponderings would appear as diabolical as those of Iago.

It is only a step from the fantastic villain and the fantastic lover to the ancient and honorable realm of mock heroics. Aristophanes opens his *"Ecclesiazusae"* with a burlesque soliloquy by Praxagora, who, in mock Euripidean style, apostrophizes the "bright eye of the wheel-formed lamp" hanging over her door. Almost as conspicuous a travesty is the lengthy lamentation of Chrysalus in the *"Bacchides"* of Plautus (IV, 9). After stating his wish to lament, the soliloquizer proceeds to draw absurdly literal comparisons between his plight and the fall of Troy. Nearly every age has its famous burlesque soliloquy. "I die, fly, fly, my soul, to Grocer's Hall!" wails Ralph at the close of *"The Knight of the Burning Pestle"* (pr. 1613). Cries the protagonist of Scarron's *"Jodelet"* (1645):

"Soyez nettes, mes dents, l'honneur vous le commande,  
Perdre les dents est tout le mal que j'appréhende" (IV, 2).

"O Tilburina!" sobs the Governor of Sheridan's *"Critic"* (1779), "from thy aged father's beard, thou plucked the few brown hairs which time had left" (III, 1).

From Aristophanes to Sheridan, the apostrophe is a favorite device of the burlesque soliloquy, but nowhere as in Shakespeare is its absurdity so effectively enhanced by frequent repetition. The soliloquies of the play within the play of *"A Midsummer-Night's Dream"* depend largely on this rhetorical trick. Five times Pyramus invokes the night and five times the wall (V, I, 170-182), and Thisbe continues the salutations to the wall (II. 190-193). The burlesque by Pyramus of the con-

ventional apostrophe to the dead includes apostrophes to the moon and to the fates and furies, as well as to the deceased sweetheart (ll. 276-292). The soliloquy continues, a parody of the suicide speech (ll. 296-312), with apostrophes to tears, sword, tongue and moon. Again, with an invocation of the dead hero, sisters three, lovers and friends, tongue and sword, Thisbe quits this bustling scene (ll. 331-354) for all eternity.

Shakespeare's immediate predecessors afford him ample opportunity for parody. Farmer cites parallels in "Damon and Pythias," and Wright in "Appius and Virginia,"<sup>28</sup> for grandiose references to the furies and the fateful sisters, while it is unnecessary to go farther than Golding's "Ovid"<sup>29</sup> for the apostrophe to the wall, and others equally inflated. A series of apostrophes introduced by "O"—the mannerism which Shakespeare here renders so ludicrous—is a contrivance often used by the Elizabethan dramatist for the purpose of eliciting pity and terror. Indeed, in "Romeo and Juliet" (IV, 5, 49-54), Shakespeare seems guilty of the same affectation, but he may be exonerated on the grounds that the lamentations of the Nurse and her companions, which have no literal significance for the audience, are serio-comic rather than tragic.

But it is no mere rhetorical trick which places Pyramus and Thisbe, mock hero and heroine, in the forefront of fantastic and burlesque figures. Each reveals his amorous condition by a maudlin admiration for the objects of nature, each exhausts the stage vocabulary of the bereaved lover, and each, with an exaggeration of the requirements of the suicide soliloquy,<sup>30</sup> doubly redoubles the announcement of the stabbing and of the expiration:

" Thus die I, thus, thus, thus,  
           Now am I dead,  
           Now am I fled;  
       My soul is in the sky.  
           Tongue, lose thy light;  
           Moon, take thy flight.  
       Now die, die, die, die, die."

<sup>28</sup> Furness Variorum Edition, p. 229, note.

<sup>29</sup> See *ante*, p. 37.

<sup>30</sup> See *ante*, pp. 79-81.

Pyramus and Thisbe are by no means caricatures of Romeo and Juliet. Rather, they epitomize theatrical rant and sentimentality in a manner irresistibly appealing to the risibles, and, in addition, their staccato meter and neat rimes tickle the auditory sense. Even while laughing uproariously, one may consistently pause to observe, "This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard."

#### THE CUCKOLD

The worried husband, a perennial subject for jest in medieval *fabliaux*, becomes a conspicuous butt in the *sermons joyeux* and the *monologues* of fifteenth and sixteenth century France. In these entertainments, M. Lintilhac notes, "les fiancés et maris plus ou moins anxieux, et pour cause" constitute one of the three important types of characters—types, he observes, which reappear in French farce.<sup>21</sup>

The worried husband also occurs in early English farce, and his soliloquies are sometimes a feature of the performance. Thus Johan's long monolog beginning Heywood's "mery play betwene Johan Johan the husbande, Tyb his wyfe, and Syr Jhan the preest" (pr. 1533) is a broadly humorous pondering on his determination to beat his wife, "that she shall repent to go a catterwawlyng." Likewise, near the opening of the piece called "Tom Tyler and his Wife" (1578 c.), the hero gives an account of his marital infelicity. Chapman's "All Fools" (1599 c.) contains the ruminations of a man who prides himself on mistrusting his wife (II, 1).

It is not until the end of the sixteenth century that the soliloquy of the cuckold becomes conventionalized. The term "cuckold" is used advisedly, not to indicate the man's affliction, as his troubles are often imaginary, but because the word occurs again and again in his monologs, together with some ill-natured allusion to the horns on his forehead, the traditional emblem of his suffering. Until the closing of the theatres, this absurd soliloquy flourishes, and it occasionally reappears in Restoration comedy, which is surcharged with the theme of cuckoldry. It is difficult for the modern critic to find any mirth in the indecent motif, or to comprehend the prolonged popu-

<sup>21</sup> *La Comédie Moyen Age et Renaissance*, p. 203.

larity of the soliloquy, which gains in successive treatment neither novelty nor variety.

Shakespeare's use of the device is no better and no worse than that of his contemporaries and successors, albeit there is considerable animation in Ford's jealous ragings. "Cuckold! Wittol! Cuckold! The devil himself hath not such a name," he storms, and he ends the soliloquy by thrice repeating the opprobrious epithet (II, 2, 300-329). Again he excitedly determines on vengeance, concluding with the inevitable reference to his horns (III, 5, 141-155).

#### THE ROGUE

A monologist vastly more pleasing to modern taste is the rogue Autolycus. Although an individual creation, he, too, belongs to a general type. The rogue of Plautus "can gleek upon occasion." Chrysalus of the "Bacchides" (IV, 4) moralizes in this fashion: "No one can be a person well to do, —unless he understands both how to do good and how to do evil. With rogues he must be a rogue; with thieves let him filch whatever he can." Pseudolus, another servant-rogue, philosophizes cynically on the success of his wiles and stratagems (II, 3). The parasite of Roman comedy is a somewhat different kind of rogue, whose monologs reveal a pride in his profession.

The soliloquies of Autolycus may be remotely dependent upon classical tradition, tinged with the flamboyant spirit of the English Vice; yet from the moment the Shakespearean rogue enters with a gay song on his lips ("The Winter's Tale," IV, 3, 1-22) to his departure as he exults in the kindness of Fortune (IV, 4, 861-873), his exuberant personality seems quite independent of tradition. "My traffic is sheets:" with naive frankness he announces to the audience his name and occupation (IV, 3, 23-32). "Ha, ha! what a fool Honesty is!" he laughs, but moralizing is foreign to his mood, and he gleefully proceeds to recount the successful prosecution of his trade (IV, 4, 605-630). With the zeal of a specialist, he is engrossed in his vocation, and, when left alone for a moment, he cannot forbear a word as to the manifold requisites

of the cut-purse (IV, 4, 683-687). "This is the time that the unjust man doth thrive," he exclaims rejoicing; "sure the gods do this year connive at us, and we may do anything extempore" (IV, 4, 687-692). Again he gives vent to the same conviction: "If I had a mind to be honest, I see Fortune would not suffer me" (IV, 4, 861-862). Hoping to help his royal master as well as himself, this prince of rogues boasts, "Let him call me rogue for being so far officious: for I am proof against that title and what shame else belongs to't" (IV, 4, 869-871).

Autolycus is entitled to a prominent place in the rogue's gallery of literature, chiefly because of the monologs which deftly indicate his care-free disposition. Comprehending and transcending the petty details of his traffic, his abundant delight in his knavery expresses itself in a genial trust in the unknown forces guiding his destiny. The fact that we may introduce a theological conception in our discussion of this theatrical rascal shows how far he is removed from the clowns of Shakespeare's early period. In his soliloquies, Autolycus reveals himself, saving your reverence, something of a picaresque evangelist.

#### THE BRAGGART

The braggart is another type with antecedents in Roman comedy, but the *miles gloriosus* does not attain distinction as a monologist until the fifteenth century. From then on, the *soldat fanfaron* is a conspicuous monologist in France,<sup>32</sup> a *genre* which includes the celebrated "Franc-archer de Bagnolet" (1468 c.).

In England, John Skelton's morality, "Magnificence," of the early sixteenth century, contains a lengthy monolog in which Magnificence compares himself with a catalog of the great, including Alexander, Charlemagne, Arthur and a host of others,<sup>33</sup> but it is "Thersites," translated from neo-Latin about 1537, which exalts the monolog of the boaster. The protagonist has six long speeches, addressed to the audience, occasionally

<sup>32</sup> "Le monologue dramatique dans l'ancien théâtre français," by Émile Picot, *Romania*, Vol. XVI, pp. 518-533.

<sup>33</sup> *Poetical Works*, edited by Alexander Dyce, Vol. I, p. 273.

indulging in a coarse jest for their benefit, but animated by the omnipresent theme, self-glorification. Again, in "Soliman and Perseda" (S. R. 1592), the vain-glorious knight Basilisco indulges in several soliloquies disclosing his ruling passion.

Beside the extravagant declaration of valor made by Ther-sites and Basilisco, the little speech of Parolles in "All's Well" (II, 3, 249-256) seems puny and insignificant. A more fitting comparison is afforded by the opening of "Johan Johan," to which reference has already been made. Johan asserts and reasserts his intention to beat his wife, but when that lady appears with the query, "Why, whom wylt thou beate, I say, thou knave?" his determination quickly vanishes. The same situation occurs in "All's Well." "I'll beat him," declares the soliloquizing Parolles, "by my life, if I can meet him with any convenience, an he were double and double a lord. I'll have no more pity of his age than I would have of—I'll beat, him, an if I could but meet him again." Thereupon the object of his wrath enters, and the courage of the braggart oozes away. In a later soliloquy he fully admits his cowardice: "I find my tongue is too fool-hardy; but my heart hath the fear of Mars before it and of his creatures, not daring the reports of my tongue" (IV, 1; 31-34).

In connection with the soliloquizer who is amusing because of his cowardice, Falstaff might be considered, and we shall presently contrast his famous observations on honor with those of many a stage braggart, showing the gulf separating the Skakespearean creation from the stock figure.

#### THE CYNIC

But first let us turn our attention to another comic monologist, the cynic. He can scarcely be termed a stock figure, for the degree of his cynicism and his mode of expression are variable quantities. Cynical monologs are frequent in Roman comedy, often the utterance of the parasite,—but they are sporadic rather than classifiable. Peniculus, opening the "Menaechmi" of Plautus, whimsically moralizes on the power of food, while Charinus, in the "Andria" of Terence (IV, 1),

states his conviction as to the irresponsibility of a class of men in regard to promises and fulfilment.

The parasite of "Damon and Pythias" (c. 1563) gives vent to some sarcastic moralizing<sup>84</sup> and comment.<sup>85</sup> The philosophizing of the late moralities occasionally acquires an equally pessimistic tone,—for example, Liberality's observations on the injustices of life, in "The Contention between Liberality and Prodigality" (c. 1600).<sup>86</sup> In a more bitterly ironical vein, old Knowell of Jonson's "Every Man in His Humor" (c. 1598) (II, 3) comments on the degeneracy of the times, while Marston, Chapman, Middleton and their followers afford many another illustration of cynical soliloquizing. Indeed, with the lowering of the ethical standards of the stage, cynicism increases. Before the closing of the theatres, the frailty of woman is a favorite theme for the comic monolog, one which grows in popularity and pruriency in the hands of Dryden and his fellows. A foretaste of such pseudo-moralizing on sex is found in the misanthropic observations of the Shepherd of "The Winter's Tale" (III, 3, 59-79).

The notable Shakespearean cynic is Thersites of "Troilus and Cressida," although "cynic" seems almost too mild an epithet to apply to this snarling railer, foul-mouthed and bitter. His monologs form a succession of vehement denunciations of his companions. "Lost in the labyrinth of his fury," he rails at Ajax and Achilles, invoking Jupiter and Mercury in a sardonic prayer (II, 3, 1-23). In a vulgar exit speech, he again pays his compliments to Achilles (III, 3, 313-316). Next he rails against Menelaus with splenetic zeal, incidentally paying his respects to Agamemnon, Achilles and Patroclus (V, 1, 53-73). Diomedes then becomes the sport of his wrath (V, 1, 95-106). "I will no more trust him when he leers than I will a serpent when he hisses:" the downright and violent assertion of his dislike has a touch of the humor of Hotspur's anger. Particularly is the similarity felt in the grim indirection of the jesting of Thersites: "He will spend his

<sup>84</sup> Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, Vol. IV, pp. 23, 32.

<sup>85</sup> U. s., p. 41.

<sup>86</sup> Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, Vol. VIII, p. 343.



mouth, and promise, like Brabblers the hound; but when he performs, astronomers foretell it." The final soliloquy constitutes a climactic burst of invective against Diomedes, Troilus, Cressida, "that stale old mouse-eaten dry cheese, Nestor, and that same dog-fox, Ulysses," "that mongrel-cur, Ajax," and "that dog of as bad a kind, Achilles." The railings of Thersites are unparalleled in the history of the soliloquy. Because of their mood, they are most nearly akin to other cynical monologues; but their trenchancy, extravagance and truculence render them unique. Doubtless they were very amusing to the audience of their time, but to-day their comic effect is blurred by their scurrility.

#### THE ANALYSTS

The meditations of Faulconbridge in "King John" are tinged with cynicism, but the comic spirit animating them seems more closely related to the soliloquies of Falstaff, Benedick and Malvolio than to the railings of Thersites. Manifestly, however, it would be difficult to conceive of temperament and ideas differing more widely than those of Falstaff, Benedick and Faulconbridge. What is the trait uniting these soliloquizers? They analyze the subject under consideration. Not attempting the introspective depths of Hamlet, they nevertheless ponder and philosophize.<sup>87</sup> The clown, the drunkard, the fantastic, the cuckold, the rogue and the braggart have monologues more or less stereotyped, so far as thought is concerned, while the railings of the cynic are equally wanting in profundity; but the analytical quality distinguishes and unites the greatest comic soliloquies of Shakespeare. Moreover, it is this very element which is the source of the fun, producing, to borrow the late Mr. Meredith's phrase, "thoughtful laughter."

#### FAULCONBRIDGE

"New-made honor doth forget men's names:" this is the kind of thesis which incites the caustic dissertations of Faulconbridge's first soliloquy (I, I, 182-219). His biting com-

<sup>87</sup> The famous ruminations of Jaques (*As You Like It*, II, 7, 12-34, 139-166) are presented as parts of conversations, and accordingly they cannot be regarded as soliloquies.

mentary on the small talk of "worshipful society" has a theme not dissimilar to the complaint of the parasite Gelasimus in the "Stichus" of Plautus (II, 1), but the satiric shafts of Gelasimus are aimed at one aspect of the emptiness of polite conversation, the invitation to dinner. Faulconbridge's parody of lordly table talk, however, is thoroughly English in its humor. Although totally dissimilar in subject matter, it reminds one of the soliloquies of the shepherds opening the Towneley miracle, "Secunda Pastorum." The ponderings of the three shepherds, saturated with pessimism, seem buoyed up by an undercurrent of good nature. Likewise, the debonair merriment of Faulconbridge, while it does not dull the edge of the satire, gives the speech a genial tone characteristically British. True, his soliloquy is not analytical in a scientific sense, but its ludicrous exposure of social foibles shows a keen and searching observation.

"In his first soliloquy he looks jestingly upon his new dignity," remarks Dr. Gervinus;<sup>28</sup> "his merriment is changed to bitter irony in the second soliloquy (II, 1, 561-598) after the sad experience of the French breach of faith with Constance." Here "commodity," in the sense of "profit" or "advantage," is the object of his ire:

"That smooth-faced gentleman, tickling Commodity,  
Commodity, the bias of the world."

He is not content, like Thersites, to vent his spleen in opprobrious epithets, but he weighs and dissects the significance of the word, finally giving up the problem, with the ironical conclusion:

"Well, whiles I am a beggar, I will rail  
And say there is no sin but to be rich;  
And being rich, my virtue then shall be  
To say there is no vice but beggary."

The whole soliloquy is a masterly revelation of the workings of the speaker's mind, and, harassed though he is, an important indication of his acumen. Fascinating throughout the drama, his sturdy personality seems more intimately disclosed in

<sup>28</sup> *Shakespeare Commentaries*, translated by F. E. Bunnètt, p. 367.

monolog than in dialog—an indubitable fact in the case of Falstaff, whose soliloquies emphatically set forth his ideas and feelings without the intervening veil of irony.

#### FALSTAFF

As Faulconbridge may be regarded as an outgrowth of the cynic, so Falstaff appears to be the outgrowth of the cowardly braggart. His series of soliloquies on honor, among the most celebrated in the history of comedy, have some interesting forerunners and successors. Following a murder in "Soliman and Perseda," the vain-glorious knight Basilisco ruminates fearfully on death, and decides to run away.<sup>39</sup> Again, Nobbs in "Jack Straw," while pondering on the fate of the rebels, touches the honor theme:

"'Tis dishonor for such as they to die in their bed,  
And credit to caper under the gallows, all save the head."<sup>40</sup>

Cowardice is often the motif of the comic monolog. Ambidexter of "Cambises," for example, explains his running away from the fight on the grounds of prudence: "It is wisdom, quoth I, by the masse, to save one!"<sup>41</sup>

At best, however, these are feeble preludes to Falstaff's disquisition, but after it occurs, its matter and manner often re-appear. The protagonist of Dekker's "Old Fortunatus" (pr. 1600) uses the catechism method peculiar to Falstaff's logic, care being the theme instead of honor. "Where dwells Care? In princes' courts? No. Among fair ladies? Neither,—" and so the eliminative process continues (I, 1). In "A King and No King" (1611) by Beaumont and Fletcher, there is a series of three soliloquies (III, 2) by Bessus which are somewhat reminiscent of Falstaff. Bessus confesses that his reputation for military prowess was occasioned by his running away. "If I might stand still in cannon-proof," he asserts with Falstaffian humor, "and have fame fall upon me, I would refuse it."

The comic monolog on honor occurs rather frequently in

<sup>39</sup> Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, Vol. V, p. 363.

<sup>40</sup> Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, Vol. V, p. 383.

<sup>41</sup> Manly, Vol. II, p. 173.

the continental drama of the seventeenth century, possibly a reflex of the serious soliloquy on the same subject which flourishes in Calderon. Calderon is fond of the comic coward. In his "Puente de Mantible," Guarin, a trickster and boaster as well as a cowardly soldier, announces in monolog (I, 3) that he has forged his name on an officer's papers in order to gain his military rank. The *gracioso* of "La Hija del Aire" is a coward who has a soliloquy on honor, beginning, "Now we are alone, honor" (I, 11); and Brito of "El Principe Constante" reveals his fear in a brief monolog (I, 14) during which he lies on the ground, shamming death. Scarron's Jodelet, soliloquizing, concludes with Falstaff's point of view, "qu'être homme d'honneur est une sottise chose" ("Le Jodelet Duelliste," III, 1). Molière's soliloquy on honor in "Sganarelle" (sc. 17) is worthy of its renown. In one of the longest soliloquies Molière wrote, Sganarelle discusses the honor of the deceived husband. At first on fire to avenge his wrong, physical terror soon persuades him that he prefers to be a live coward rather than a dead hero, a determination which he states in so many words. Likewise, Mascarille of the "Dépit Amoureux" (V, 1) affirms his preference for this world rather than the next,—the only other instance in Molière of fear as the theme of a comic monolog, and this an abridgment of its Italian source, "L'Interesse" (I, 4).

It is noteworthy that nearly all of the predecessors and successors of Falstaff, both in England and on the continent, depend upon the fear of the speaker to incite the laughter of the audience. Falstaff himself is the exception to the rule. Not fear, but prudence, is the mainspring of comedy in his soliloquies on honor. True, stage tradition has done its best to render him the conventional coward. At the time of the restoration, Thomas Fuller referred to him as "a thrasonical Puff and emblem of Mock-valour,"<sup>42</sup> a characterization which is not corroborated by a study of the soliloquies.

In the masterly "Essay on the Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff" (1777), Maurice Morgann has vindicated Falstaff's courage for all time, chiefly by citation from his solilo-

<sup>42</sup> *The Worthies of England*, edited by Nicholas, Vol. II, p. 131.

quies. "I have led my ragamuffins where they are pepper'd. There's not three of my hundred and fifty left alive," announces Falstaff *solus* ("The First Part of Henry the Fourth," V, 3, 35-38). "To whom does he say this?" demands Morgann.<sup>43</sup> "To himself only; he speaks in soliloquy. There is no questioning the fact, he *led* them; they *were peppered*; there were not *three left alive*." The critic concedes, on second thought, that Falstaff's "modes of expression, even in soliloquy, will admit of some abatement," in regard to the precise number who survived; but, in general, the position is well taken that the soliloquy has the ring of sincerity. As to Falstaff's notions of honor, Morgann calls attention to the fact that "these passages are spoken in soliloquy and in battle: If every soliloquy made under similar circumstances were as audible as Falstaff's, the imputation might be found too general for censure."<sup>44</sup> Herein lies the secret of the universal appeal of the soliloquies. "Falstaff was a kind of military free-thinker," concludes his apologist.<sup>45</sup> "He stands upon the ground of natural courage only and common sense, and has, it seems, too much wit for a hero."

Morgann's commentary is the key to Falstaff's soliloquies on honor. It is the naturalism of his emotions and the logic of his "free-thinking," as well as his witty manner of expressing himself, which startle his audience into thoughtful laughter. "Honor pricks me on," he asserts (V, 1, 127-143)—surely the utterance of a valorous spirit. "Yea, but how if honor prick me off?" Here his analytical mind seizes the problem. "Can honor set to a leg?" His wit conducts the catechism. The point of view may be materialistic, but, granting the premises, the conclusion is inevitable: "Honor is a mere scutcheon." Falstaff is shocked by the concrete example of his abstract theorizing, when he comes upon the corpse of Sir Walter Blunt. "There's honor for you," he exclaims (V, 3, 32), and again, "I like not such grinning honor as Sir Walter hath"

<sup>43</sup> *Eighteenth Century Essays on Shakespeare*, edited by D. Nichol Smith, p. 262.

<sup>44</sup> U. s., p. 264.

<sup>45</sup> U. s., p. 264.

(V, 3, 63). The theme is resumed from a deeply personal standpoint (V, 4, 111-131). The Prince having departed after pronouncing a brief valediction over his fat comrade's body, that gentleman springs up, enraged and terrorized. This is not the fear of a weakling, but rather the instinctive dread of death found in every creature capable of feeling. Falstaff's sense of humor does not desert him, although his jesting is in deadly earnest when he affirms, "To die is to be a counterfeit," a conviction which he translates into the proverb, "The better part of valor is discretion." In the presence of "this gunpowder Percy," cunning, as well as fear, lays hold of Falstaff's mood. Repulsive and ghastly, the stabbing terminates the scene, a grotesquely fitting culmination of the series of soliloquies on honor. The episode must have wrought its audience well-nigh to the point of hysteria; and, if this is not deemed compensation for its barbarity, let it be remembered that the corpse had to be removed in some way, and that at least this has the merit of being a theatrical method.

Next to the honor soliloquies, those on Justice Shallow are most famous. The celebrated description of the Justice, in which he is likened to a "forked radish" and other delightful similes (Part II, III, 2, 323-357), depends incidentally on its word-painting and word-play for amusement, and fundamentally on the humorous contrast in temperament and physique between the narrator and the hero of the narrative. Again the fat knight makes merry at the expense of the lean squire in the speech beginning, "If I were saw'd into quantities, I should make four dozen of such bearded hermits' staves as Master Shallow" (Part II, V, 1, 69-95). He proceeds to analyze "the semblable coherence of his men's spirits and his," and he concludes with one of those vivid comparisons indicative of his exuberant spirits, "O you shall see him laugh till his face be like a wet cloak ill laid up."

The contemptuous attitude of the big toward the small and of vigor toward pusillanimity is an essentially comic relation, as evidenced by Falstaff's account of Shallow and by Hotspur's caustic description of the foppish envoy (Part I, I, 3, 29-69). Falstaff's adverse comment of young Lancaster is not quite so

happy, although thoroughly characteristic (Part II, IV, 3, 92-102); but it is merged into the renowned dissertation on the merits of "a good sherris-sack," which, in its orderly account of the physical and psychological benefits resulting from the stimulant, is a sort of *sermon joyeux* on the text, "O God, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains!"

The remaining soliloquies of Falstaff are of comparative insignificance. Two sprightly exit speeches (Part I, III, 3, 229-230; Part II, I, 2, 272-278), and a scurrilous link which has the sole merit of being consistent with the mood of the monologist (Part II, I, 2, 255-260) complete the list of Falstaff's soliloquies in "Henry the Fourth." Those in "The Merry Wives" are on a lower plain of humor. They include three links quite lacking in distinction,<sup>46</sup> a mildly amusing account of Falstaff's escapade in the Thames (III, 5, 4-18), and a pseudo-comic lament containing, presumably, a local reference to the courtly audience at Windsor: "If it should come to the ear of the court, how I have been transformed and how my transformation hath been wash'd and cudgell'd, they would melt me out of my fat drop by drop, and liquor fishermen's boots with me" (IV, 5, 95-105). The oil in Falstaff, almost as inexhaustible as the widow's oil, recurs as the subject of another monologic jest (V, 5, 38-40). The most conspicuous soliloquy in the piece is the one beginning, "The Windsor bell hath struck twelve" (V, 5, 1-16). Here, if tradition is authentic, is the realization of Queen Elizabeth's wish: Falstaff is in love. The grandiose expression of his amorous desire is very close to a burlesque of those perfervid soliloquies of the times anticipating the gratification of passion.

So transitory is the effect of the monologs in "The Merry Wives" that, whenever reference is made to the soliloquies of Falstaff, it is invariably to the immortal ones in "Henry the Fourth." There the true Falstaff, philosopher and wit, analyzes and marshals his ideas. Whether his theme is sherris, Shallow or honor, the analytical process is evident. Falstaff is never in doubt, however. His opinions are fixed, dogmatic,

<sup>46</sup> II, 2, 143-149, 156-159; III, 5, 58-60.

argumentative and humorously sequential. These qualities are laughably apparent in the soliloquy in which honor is practically annihilated by a pseudo-Socratic method of interrogation. The question-and-answer device with which Falconbridge epitomizes social chit chat (I, I, 193-204) also serves to relieve the monotony of the monolog, but it contains no suggestion of Falstaffian ratiocination.

#### LAUNCELOT GOBBO

It remains for Launcelot Gobbo, clown though he is, to combine in soliloquy (II, 2, 1-33) the quick interchange of conversation with the psychological attitude of uncertainty. His conscience and the fiend personify the opposing forces warring within him. To be sure, the subject of his anxiety and his absurd rumination thereon are not calculated to give the effect of serious introspection. Dr. Kilian condemns the "purely theatrical" handling of the speech, observing that the element of dialog can be happily adapted to monolog, as Lessing has shown.<sup>47</sup> There is no doubt that the conversational method is capable of tragic as well as comic effects in soliloquy.<sup>48</sup> Launcelot is mock serious. "'Budge,' says the fiend. 'Budge not,' says my conscience": his remarks border on the burlesque of those soliloquies of all ages which depict the crisis "where duty and inclination come nobly to the grapple." "The Rehearsal" (1671) of Villers and his companions contains a well-known parody of the love-versus-honor soliloquy in vogue at the time: Volscious, alone with one boot on, the other off, is torn by conflicting impulses:

"Honor, aloud, commands, pluck both boots on;  
But softer Love does whisper, put on none" (III, 2).

Launcelot's monolog is not so obvious a parody, but it is "theatrical," as Dr. Kilian says. In fact, although Launcelot is a clown rather than an analyst, his histrionic, serio-comic pondering anticipates the solemn weighing of the pro's and con's of a question by Malvolio and Benedick.

<sup>47</sup> *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, Vol. XXXIX, p. 38.

<sup>48</sup> See *ante*, p. 102.



## MALVOLIO

Malvolio's soliloquy (II, 5, 27 ff.) begins with some exalted imaginings of his future state, but his analytical frame of mind is evidenced by his deliberate examination of the superscription of the letter and by his painstaking consideration of the "M, O, A, I." "'M, O, A, I, doth sway my life.' Nay, but first, let me see, let me see, let me see": his cautious ruminations are comic in themselves, and the fun grows uproarious in the comments and rejoinders of the eaves-droppers. The situation, made possible by the convention of the overheard soliloquy,<sup>49</sup> is largely responsible for the hilarity of the occasion; but, after all, Malvolio's ponderous weighing of the evidence is the pivot about which the merry by-plot revolves. His very deliberation creates, as it were, an atmosphere of comic suspense, and his smug conclusion, after reading the letter, gives the finishing touch of joyous anticipation.

His next soliloquy (III, 4, 71-91) shows him enmeshed in the plot, the amusement culminating in his pondering on Olivia's words and finding in them a deeply amorous significance. Exactly the same device is used in Benedick's soliloquy (*Much Ado*, II, 3, 266-273).<sup>50</sup> Indeed, Shakespeare repeats himself in the use of the comic monologs by these two characters: both soliloquizers are revealed the dupes of eaves-dropping conspirators, and both appear absurd coxcombs in their infatuation.

## BENEDICK

Benedick is much more elaborately and sympathetically depicted than Malvolio, but nevertheless the audience is inclined to laugh at him rather than with him. He is the outgrowth of such fantastic soliloquizers as Biron of "Love's Labor's Lost"; and Benedick's railings against love have remote prototypes in the French *monologues* by lovers and in the *sermons joyeux* on love, women and marriage,<sup>51</sup> as well as in occasional soliloquies of Roman comedy. The "Trinummus" of Plautus

<sup>49</sup> See *ante*, p. 93.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. also *All's Well*, IV, 1, 27-69; see *ante*, p. 119.

<sup>51</sup> *Romania*, Vol. XV, p. 362.

contains a lengthy rumination by Lysiteles (II, 1), in which the problem of love-versus-aggrandisement is carefully and somewhat humorously weighed. Love is characterized as "a fawning flatterer, a rapacious grappler, a deceiver, a sweet-tooth, a spoiler, a corrupter of men who court retirement," and the like,—an attitude more violent than Benedick's, but somewhat analogous to his feelings before he becomes enthralled.

Soliloquy (II, 3, 7-39) discloses his point of view at the outset: he marvels "that one man, seeing how much another is a fool when he dedicates his behaviors to love, will, after he has laughed at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love." After considering the woful plight of Claudio, he turns his attention to himself: may he be so converted? He thinks not. His supercilious arrogance, as he approaches the pitfall, adds amusement as well as interest to his cogitations. Pondering on his adamantine invulnerability to feminine charms, he is tricked into cataloging the graces of the paragon whom he might condescend to wed. Rich, wise, virtuous, fair, noble, of good discourse, an excellent musician,—so run his requirements, but he graciously leaves one detail to providence: "and her hair shall be of what color it please God." With masterly technic, the whole soliloquy is keyed to the mood of high comedy. Preceded by a brief colloquy with the boy and concluded with a cleverly prepared entrance, Benedick's intervening speech gives the impression of thought, a droll and natural revelation of his ripeness for love, unknown to himself.

His next soliloquy (II, 3, 228-255) is a sequel to the preceding one. Now he discovers his affection for Beatrice. The more serious his feelings become, the more delightful for the audience, which usually relishes beholding the biter bit. Benedick himself foresees that he will be the butt of raillery, but he waives the point. The fun is climactic, and the entrance of the subject of the discourse gives the cue for the final touch: "I do spy some marks of love in her." Her acrid remarks, accompanied by her withdrawal, affords Benedick an opportunity to conclude his musings (II, 3, 266-273) with superb confidence and compassion. His other soliloquies are of little

importance. The first one (II, 1, 208-216) shows him nettled by Beatrice's sharp tongue. In the last one (V, 2, 25-41), he sings an old song and babbles amorously, an excellent preparation for the vivacity of the ensuing scene.

#### CONCLUSION

Situation, language and mood all add to the ludicrous effect of the Shakespearean monolog. Situation is of the least consequence, since often the speech may be regarded as independent of its setting. Notable exceptions, however, are afforded by the monolog of the Porter in "Macbeth," significant by contrast, and by Falstaff's stabbing, the culmination of a series of episodes and ideas. Shakespeare does not despise the tricks of language, such as puns, malapropisms, and incorrect combinations of words,—especially in his early work. Further, he infuses his comic monologs with a striking mood, generally one of gaiety, but sometimes of exaggeration, violence or perplexity. The mood, however, subserves the personality of the speaker, which, in the final analysis, constitutes the essential comedy of the soliloquy.

Launce the clown, Pyramus and Thisbe, mock hero and heroine, Thersites the cynic, and Autolycus the rogue,—these comic monologists have impressed their individualities on the world's memory. Yet they may be styled figures of one dimension, as they conform more or less closely to a type. Their speeches were not without predecessors, but never before was the appeal so irresistible. The anecdote had never been quite so effectively told as by Launce; the burlesque monodies had never been so extravagantly farcical as those of Pyramus and Thisbe; no railer had been so bitterly violent as Thersites; no rogue so charmingly droll as Autolycus.

As a matter of course, the analysts are more individual than the stock figures. Launcelot Gobbo's monolog piques the imagination, because of its clownish attempt at analytical psychology; Malvolio adds the element of ponderous dignity to his meditations, another stimulus for producing mirth; while Benedick actually attains comic introspection. He is not deciphering the puzzle of "M, O, A, I," but thinking gravely—

and therein lies the humor—on the problem of love and its relation to himself. Thus Shakespeare's comic monologs run the gamut from buffoonery to high comedy, from the story frankly addressed to the audience to the soliloquy as a conventionalized medium for the revelation of thought and feeling. The use of the thoughtful monolog for provoking laughter is not original with Shakespeare. It was employed in France as early as "Maitre Pierre Patelin" (1469 c.), and in England at rare intervals from the time of the Playwright of Wakefield and John Heywood; but not until Shakespeare does it unite a high degree of technical consistency with an inimitable expression of individuality.

Faulconbridge's somewhat trivial commentaries on social life carry, not only because of their satiric tang, but also because they characterize the speaker; while the reasoning of Falstaff has all the weight of his own personality. His series of soliloquies on honor, among the most notable in English drama, involve the issue of life or death. Related to the monologs of the *miles gloriosus*, the coward *gracioso*, and kindred types, these are the opinions of an experienced soldier, logical and witty. His sentiments are laughable, not because they are fantastic or grotesque, but because they are firmly rooted in human nature. Moreover, although detachable from the rest of the drama, Falstaff's soliloquies constitute a body of evidence essential for a comprehension of his character. As Hamlet's musings reveal the tragic tensivity of his nature, so Falstaff's disclose his genial and pervasive comic spirit.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE REVELATION OF THOUGHT AND FEELING

The transition from the soliloquy which is frankly speech to that which implies a revelation of thought and emotion is gradual and almost imperceptible. Yet the distinction is evident: Launce talks, whereas Hamlet thinks and feels. As we have observed, the comic monologist sometimes attains the mood of introspection, but even Falstaff addresses the audience. In tragedy and dramatic romance, on the other hand, the introspective soliloquy is the rule rather than the exception.

### THE APOLOGY FOR THE INTROSPECTIVE SOLILOQUY

The apologies which dramatists of various ages and nations have inserted in their works to account for the soliloquizer's speaking his inmost thoughts have merely served to accentuate the unreality of the convention. Clytemnestra's soliloquy which opens the second act of Seneca's "Agamemnon" seems purposely to ignore the medium of speech, for the Nurse interrupts, asking the cause of Clytemnestra's silent ("tacita") brooding, and the point is emphasized by repetition,—“Although thou art silent” (“Licet ipsa sileas”). Evidently Studley, who Englished the piece for the “Tenne Tragedies,” could not fathom the implication: speech was speech to him. Therefore he altered the Nurse's question, “Quid tacita versas?” to “What muttering dost thou say?”

The soliloquy as a talking to one's self is the usual explanation, and this is a significant step toward introspection, since the idea of the address to the audience is thereby carefully excluded. After the Nurse's monolog beginning the Euripidean “Medea,” the Attendant comes to her with the inquiry, “Why dost thou . . . stand here at the gate alone, loudly lamenting to thyself the piteous tale?” Similar apologies occur in Robert Greene's “Alphonsus”<sup>1</sup> and in Calderon's

<sup>1</sup> *Works*, edited by J. C. Collins, Vol. I, p. 116.

"Painter of His Own Dishonor."<sup>2</sup> At the opening of the Towneley "Secunda Pastorum," the First Shepherd thus apologizes for his audible musings:

"It does me good, as I walk thus by myn oone,  
Of this world for to talk in maner of mone."

So Preston in his "Cambises" has the soliloquizing Lord Smirdis remark, "Solitary to myselfe now I may talke."<sup>3</sup> The excuse recurs in the nineteenth century poets.<sup>4</sup> David of Browning's "Saul" says, "Let me tell out my tale to its ending—my voice to my heart."

Even Hamlet laments that he is reduced to the extremity of unpacking his heart with words (II, 2, 614), but the next thought, "About, my brain!" brings back his soliloquy into the realm of ratiocination. Indeed the only occurrence in Shakespeare of anything bordering on an explanation of the convention is the scene in which Titus Andronicus, discovered apostrophizing the stones, offers this curious reason for the phenomenon:

"Therefore I tell my sorrows to the stones;  
Who, though they cannot answer my distress,  
Yet in some sort they are better than the tribunes,  
For they will not intercept my tale" (III, 1, 37-40).

The time-honored custom of addressing the soliloquy to the air is no less fanciful, but perhaps it is a step nearer subjectivity, since the ideas are thereby dissociated not only from the spectators but also from the entire objective world. The Prometheus of Aeschylus, left chained to the rock, invokes the "divine ether and swift-winged winds,"—the cry of his very soul piercing the solitude.

"Alas! alas! 'tis hard to speak to the winds;  
Still harder to be dumb,"

he mourns. Euripides attempts the same motivation in the soliloquy of the protagonist opening the "Iphigenia among the

<sup>2</sup> *Eight Dramas of Calderon*, by Edward Fitzgerald, p. 54.

<sup>3</sup> Manly, Vol. II, p. 190.

<sup>4</sup> See *ante*, p. 96.

Tauri": "Strange visions the past night brought me, which I will tell to the air, if there is really any help in that." Pieces as widely different as Calderon's "Physician of his Honor" (I, 5) and the "Virginius" (I, 2) of Sheridan Knowles have heroines who confide the secret of their love to the "gentle air." "O thou most silent air, that shalt not hear what now I think!" cries Shelley's Cenci (I, 1) in a strained effort to reconcile the convention with reality. In the same soliloquy Cenci affirms that he need not speak, "though the heart triumphs with itself in words." "This shows," observes Professor Bates,<sup>8</sup> "that Shelley himself regarded the soliloquy as a form of actual speech instead of as a merely symbolic means of making known to us unspoken and concealed feelings that could not otherwise be made manifest."

All of the apologists admit that the soliloquizer is talking—else there would be no need of apology—yet in each form of explanation there is an attempt to harmonize the symbol with the fact. The soliloquizer is talking to himself, assert one group of apologists, of whom Molière and Joanna Baillie<sup>9</sup> take elaborate pains to indicate that the speaker is in a kind of trance, as he gives utterance to his secret thoughts and feelings. Other dramatists present a solitary character talking to the air; but Shelley, evidently trying to depict the heart triumphing with itself in words, is forced by his own reasoning into a logical blind-alley, and accordingly he strikes his soliloquizer dumb. Not so Shakespeare's Titus, who, unlike the creatures of other apologists, boldly defends his apostrophe as sensible and consistent.

#### THE APOSTROPHE

Apostrophes to the air and even to the stones transcend the commonplace and consequently give range to the spirit. Indeed the apostrophe is an important rhetorical contrivance for expressing the inmost convictions and impulses. Since the beginning of drama, the number and variety of monologic apostrophes is legion. Leo observes that the only soliloquies in the

<sup>8</sup> *A Study of Shelley's Drama, the Cenci*, p. 53.

<sup>9</sup> See *ante*, p. 96.

extant dramas of Aeschylus—the openings of “Prometheus Bound,” “Agamemnon” and “Eumenides”—are all uttered not as communings with the soul, but as apostrophes to the gods or to the encompassing solitude of the elements! The soliloquies of classic tragedy owe no small measure of their lofty mood to the device, and Seneca helps to preserve the tradition for England. Jasper Heywood, translating Seneca’s “Thyestes,” added a final monolog by the protagonist. Beginning

“O King of Mytis dungeon darke, and grisly Ghosts of hell,”

it abounds in the grandiose apostrophes introduced by “O” which delighted the Elizabethans, and which were immortalized in parody by “A Midsummer-Night’s Dream” (V, 1).

Shakespeare freely uses the apostrophe in impassioned and introspective soliloquies. The address to the dead and the sleeping, as well as to dagger and sword, we have already discussed.<sup>8</sup> The soliloquizer often addresses himself, a device which, according to Leo (p. 94), first appears in Hesiod. In Shakespeare the self-adjuration is sometimes jesting,<sup>9</sup> often serious,<sup>10</sup> and occasionally marked by a tragic intensity, as when, for example, Angelo asks, “What dost thou, or what art thou, Angelo?”<sup>11</sup> [Akin to the apostrophe of self is Hamlet’s calling upon his heart and sinews (I, 5, 93–94), and again upon his heart and soul (III, 2, 411, 417).

Hamlet’s memorable “Remember thee!” (I, 5, 97–104) illustrates another kind of apostrophe frequent in Shakespearean soliloquy, the address to a character who has just made his exit. By aid of this device, the playwright elicits a variety of emotions,—sympathy in the farewells to Andronicus (III, 1, 289) and Shylock (II, 5, 56–57), merriment in the

<sup>8</sup> Friedrich Leo: “Der Monolog im Drama: ein Beitrag zur griechisch-römischen Poetik,” *Abhandlungen der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen Philologisch-Historische Klasse, Neue Folge, Band X, Nro. 5, Berlin, 1908, p. 9.*

<sup>9</sup> See *ante*, pp. 75, 76, 79.

<sup>10</sup> *Merry Wives*, II, 2, 144–147; III, 5, 142–144.

<sup>11</sup> *Titus Andronicus*, I, 1, 338–340; II, 1, 12. *Two Gentlemen*, V, 4, 18. *King Lear*, I, 4, 4.

<sup>12</sup> *Measure for Measure*, II, 2, 173.



quips of King Henry the Fifth (IV, 1, 34, 63), excitement in the curses invoked on Gremio in "The Taming of the Shrew" (II, 1, 406) and on the Nurse of "Romeo and Juliet" (III, 5, 235), and sentiment in Romeo's lover-like adjuration to the departing Juliet (II, 2, 187-188) and in Othello's impassioned tribute to Desdemona as she withdraws (III, 3, 88-89).

The romantic soliloquy often contains an address to the absent loved one. Proteus apostrophizes his Julia, and Valentine his Sylvia (I, 1, 66-69; V, 4, 11-12), Jessica her Lorenzo (II, 3, 19-21), and Juliet her Romeo (III, 2, 6, 17). The absent sweetheart supposedly dead is invoked by Romeo in the famous line "Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee tonight" (V, 1, 34) and by Antony under similar circumstances in his "I will o'ertake thee, Cleopatra" (IV, 14, 44).

The character apostrophized is usually a leading figure of the drama: Richard the Second is thus addressed (II, 3, 18), and so are Antony of "Antony and Cleopatra" (IV, 9, 18-23) and Posthumus of "Cymbeline" (III, 6, 14-15; IV, 1, 15-19). Cymbeline himself is invoked in an exceptionally awkward fashion (III, 3, 99), the attempt at the grand style scarcely fitting the crudely narrative monolog. On the other hand, the keen analysis of personality and the bold sweep of imagination characterizing Lady Macbeth's opening soliloquy (I, 5, 16-31) depend upon the same rhetorical device. The reading of Macbeth's letter, to be sure, adds naturalism to the apostrophe to the writer, and the letter-reading contrivance likewise lends vivacity to Hotspur's upbraiding of his lordly correspondent (II, 3, 9-16), the reply of the Countess to her "rash and unbridled boy" ("All's Well," III, 2, 30), and Pisanio's grieved remonstrance to his master ("Cymbeline," III, 2, 1-12). Pisanio concludes his soliloquy by violently reproaching the letter itself.

Indeed the variety of things apostrophized defies classification, although it is interesting to note some of the conspicuous themes. Supplication is often made to the night and the moon by Elizabethan soliloquizers, to which fact the burlesque invocations of Pyramus and Thisbe testify (V, 1, 171-173, 276-280, 310). Juliet's rhapsody beginning "Come, civil night,"

and concluding "Come, gentle night, come, loving, black-browed night" (III, 2, 10-20) indicates the romantic possibilities of the apostrophe; while Lady Macbeth's "Come, thick night" (I, 5, 51) reveals its tragic power. The last words of Enobarbus to the night and the moon (IV, 9, 5, 6-15) display the quasi-tragic effects of the apostrophe.

The invocation to sleep gives rise to some of the noblest poetry in Shakespeare,—for example, Henry the Fourth's majestic and musical reverie (Part II, III, 1, 5-30). Henry's supplication to "gentle Sleep," "thou dull god," and "partial Sleep" seem a prelude to the various epithets into which Macbeth's imagination coins the theme (II, 2, 36-40); while Iachimo's soliloquy over the slumbering Imogen affords an epilog to the series:

"O sleep, thou ape of death, lie dull upon her!" (II, 2, 31).

Apostrophes to abstract qualities, like those to sleep, are especially suited to the mood of the reflective soliloquy,—for example, Mark Antony's address to Mischief ("Julius Caesar," III, 2, 265), Hamlet's to Frailty (I, 2, 146) and Henry the Fifth's elaborate apostrophe to Ceremony (IV, 2, 257-283). The frequency of personifications in Elizabethan drama is doubtless due to the influence of the morality plays. Invocations of the goddess Fortune, very prevalent in Elizabethan days, appear in the soliloquies of almost every age and clime. Cloten invokes the fickle deity (IV, 1, 25), as Rákshasa does in the Sanskrit piece "Mudrá-Rákshasa."<sup>12</sup>

#### THE PRAYER

The address to qualities and things sometimes assumes the guise of prayer. Lear's moralizing on "You houseless poverty" he styles a prayer (III, 4, 27). Timon's misanthropic moralizing on one occasion begins, "O blessed breeding sun" (IV, 3, 1), and on another occasion, "Common mother, thou,"—an apostrophe to the earth (IV, 3, 177); while his multitudinous apostrophes to Athens, its walls, matrons, slaves, fools, bankrupts, and so forth, are ironically blended into a

<sup>12</sup> *Select Specimens of the Hindu Drama*, Vol. II, p. 175.

semblance to prayer, concluding with an "Amen" (IV, 1, 1-41). One of the soliloquies of Thersites is also merged into a violently ironic prayer, terminating in a similar fashion: "I have said my prayers, and devil Envy say Amen" (II, 3, 10-24).

(Doubtless due to the religious origin of the serious drama, the prayer, especially as the opening monolog, is one of the oldest forms of soliloquy. Aeschylus abounds in supplications to the elements and to divinities, and Euripides revives the device, practically abandoned by Sophocles. The "Suppliants" and "Phoenician Maidens" of Euripides begin with invocations of the gods. Seneca also uses the opening prayer; at the outset of the "Medea," for example, the heroine entreats the vengeance of the gods.

Likewise the miracle plays often open with prayer. The Coventry cycle is especially addicted to this introduction, and the Abraham play of the York group effectively utilizes the contrivance. Even the brisk buffoonery of the Towneley Noah play is prologued by a long and pious invocation. The miracles sometimes begin with a succession of prayers,<sup>13</sup> and the tradition of the opening prayer is continued in a number of the moralities. Rastell's "Nature of the Four Elements" (1517 c.) has a prolog which is a prayer for the audience, and Lyndsay's "Satire of the Three Estates" opens with a prayer to the "Lord of Lords and King of Kings." In "Mankind," Tytyvillus enters and observes Mankind on his knees, saying his "Pater noster,"<sup>14</sup>—a situation similar to that in which Hamlet sees the King praying (III, 3).

The prayers which are occasionally interspersed in the early drama of England are the result of classical as well as native influence. Tancred's invocation to Jove the thunderer in "Gismond of Salerne" (IV, 2) is a stock device in Seneca,<sup>15</sup> destined to become no less familiar in English tragedy. Side

<sup>13</sup> Examples: the York *Flight of Egypt*, p. 138, and the Coventry *Noah's Flood*, p. 40.

<sup>14</sup> Manly, Vol. I, p. 336.

<sup>15</sup> J. W. Cunliffe: "Gismond of Salerne," *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, New Series, Vol. XIV, No. 2, p. 454.

by side with such prayers to mythological deities are many supplications to the Christian god in the works of Shakespeare's predecessors. Shakespeare's master Marlowe puts in the mouth of the dying Sigismund a cry to the "just and dreadful punisher of sin" ("Tamburlaine," Part II, II, 3), while Olympia, about to suicide, exclaims,

"Ah sacred Mahomet, if this be sin,  
Entreat a pardon of the God of Heaven" (u. s., III, 4).

The introspective attitude of prayer, as well as its deep spiritual significance, is invariably emphasized by Shakespeare. He who judges all things is implored to stay his thoughts by the King in "The Second Part of Henry the Sixth" (III, 2, 136-146). On the eve of battle, Richmond of "Richard the Third" prays for victory:

"Make us thy ministers of chastisement  
That we may praise Thee in the victory" (V, 3, 114-115).

Likewise, before the fight, Henry the Fifth in majestic phrase asks aid of the God of battles, at the same time beseeching pardon for his father's sin (IV, 1, 306-322). King Henry's account of the devices he has used for obtaining divine forgiveness give the impression of rhetorical pageantry rather than sincere contrition, since, like the King in "Hamlet," he wants to be pardoned and retain the offence. The soliloquy of Claudius, however, is a human document depicting a guilty soul's struggle to pray (III, 3, 36-72). Realizing the enormity of his crime, he cannot find words with which to ask forgiveness. He starts and halts. Then comes the revelation of the divine code, questions, exclamations, the poignant plea for help, the pliant yielding of the knees, and the beautiful trust of the concluding hope. "The final 'All may be well!'" says Coleridge,<sup>18</sup> "is remarkable; the degree of merit attributed by the self-flattering soul to its own struggle, though baffled, and to the indefinite half-promise, half-command, to persevere in religious duties. The solution is in the divine *medium* of the Christian doctrine of expiation." The whole soliloquy seems a depiction of feelings and ideas rather than of spoken words.

<sup>18</sup> Furness Variorum Edition of *Hamlet*, Vol. I, p. 280.

The pagan prayers in Shakespeare are treated with less elaboration than the Christian ones. Pericles calls upon "Thou god of this great vast" and upon Lucina, "divinest patroness" (III, I, 1-14). Posthumus calls upon the gods in his anguish (V, I, 7, 31), and Imogen's pagan prayer before sleeping is charming in its simplicity and brevity (II, I, 8-10). "By your leave, gods!" cries Titinius before killing himself ("Julius Caesar," V, 3, 89), but such invocations are too short to merit consideration as prayers. On the other hand, Lady Macbeth's famous supplication to the "Spirits that tend on mortal thoughts" (I, 5, 41-51) is especially significant in this study for two reasons: first, since it invokes the aid of "murdering ministers," it differs from the other prayers in its evil intent; second, the spirits called upon attend thoughts, thus implying—and the context corroborates the assumption—that the soliloquy is a revelation of thought. Lady Macbeth's turgid utterance seems a glimpse of dark and hidden purposes yet unphrased, and the impression is given color by the summoning of the spirits attending deadly thoughts.

#### TEXTUAL INDICATIONS OF INTROSPECTION

As in the case of Lady Macbeth's baneful prayer, introspection is often indicated by a reference to thought in the text of the soliloquy. Thus Chánakya of the "Mudrá-Rákshasa" speaks of "these anxious thoughts."<sup>17</sup> The introspective character of Senecan drama leaves its mark on the majority of the soliloquies of English tragedy. To be sure, medieval tradition, as manifested in the reflections of Everyman, has its influence; but it is the Senecan tragedy "Gorboduc" which first clearly enunciates the English soliloquy as a revelation of thought intimately associated with the progress of the action. The text of "Gorboduc," however, ~~offers no such evidence of mental processes as occur in "The Misfortunes of Arthur."~~ There Mordred begins with a translation of "Thyestes," 418-420:<sup>18</sup>

"A troubled head: my mind revolts to fear,  
And bears my body back."<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *Select Specimens of the Theater of the Hindus*, Vol. II, p. 193.

<sup>18</sup> See Cunliffe's *Senecan Influence*, p. 149, and also Appendix II.

<sup>19</sup> Hazlitt's *Dodsley*, Vol. IV, p. 295.

The soliloquizer continues, "I inwards feel my fall"—an observation nothing if not introspective; and he adds, "My thoughts misgive me much." In "Arden of Feversham," Mosbie opens a soliloquy with the explanation, "Disturbed thoughts drive me from company,"<sup>20</sup> and Michael of the same piece begins his meditations with a reference to the 'conflicting thoughts encamped in his breast.'<sup>20</sup> Likewise Bajazet at the opening of "The First Part of Selimus" exclaims,

"So, Bajazet, now thou remainest alone,  
Unrip the thoughts that harbor in thy breast,—"

an unequivocal acknowledgment that the soliloquy depicts thought. The fact that the Elizabethan word "thought" may signify "care," "anxiety," "sorrow" or "brooding" does not dissociate the term from intellectual processes. Greene's Orlando thus catechises himself,

"Orlando, what contrarious thoughts be these  
That flock with doubtful motions in thy mind?"<sup>21</sup>

Shakespeare's predecessors afford a number of similar instances, and, after his usage crystallizes the introspective soliloquy as a convention, his successors often avail themselves of it. In one of the most effectively histrionic soliloquies in the language, Antonio of Marston's "Antonio and Mellida" muses on the introspective faculties in this fashion:

"When discursive powers fly out,  
And roam in progress through the bounds of heaven,  
The soul itself gallops along with them,  
As chieftain of this winged troop of thought,  
Whilst the dull lodge of spirit standeth waste,  
Until the soul return from —. What was't I said?"<sup>22</sup>

While soaring in the realms of imagination, Marston's hero makes an abrupt transition to speech. It is a peculiarity of the convention that, even when the soliloquy most graphically reveals the workings of the brain, there is apt to be some reference to the tongue as the means of expression—an indication

<sup>20</sup> *Arden of Feversham*, edited by Dr. N. Delius, pp. 44, 37.

<sup>21</sup> *Plays and Poems*, edited by J. C. Collins, Vol. I, p. 239.

<sup>22</sup> *Works*, edited by A. H. Bullen, Vol. I, p. 63.

that the Elizabethans were not fully conscious of the symbolic value of the artifice they had created. Macbeth beholds the fatal vision,

"A dagger of the mind, a false creation,  
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain" (II, 1, 38-39);

and yet in another instant he regrets the words of his soliloquy:

"Whiles I threat he lives:  
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives" (II, 1, 61).

"About, my brain!" cries Hamlet (II, 2, 617), and dexterously the audience is transported into his mental processes; but only a moment before, he laments his unpacking his heart with words. To be sure, there is nothing violently antipodal in these two assertions: the reflection may be interpreted either as thought or as speech. Quite possibly neither playwright nor auditor ever considered the matter.

Nevertheless, it is interesting to observe that in the meditations of Shakespearean soliloquizers, particularly in those of Hamlet, the word "thought" and the idea of thinking constantly recur. "Let me not think on't!" says Hamlet to himself (I, 2, 146). Again, he speaks of 'the table of his memory' and 'the book and volume of his brain' (I, 5, 98, 103). "Conscience" he uses in the sense of "pondering" or "thought" (III, 1, 83); and the whole soliloquy is "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought"—"thought" here signifying "anxious reflection."

"Whether it be  
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple  
Of thinking too precisely on the event,—  
A thought which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom  
And ever three parts coward,—"

thus in Hamlet's last soliloquy he analyzes his reasoning,—an indubitably introspective attitude.

The word "thought" so frequently recurs in Shakespearean soliloquy that it appears intentionally used to accentuate the meditative mood. "Now, York, or never, steel thy fearful thoughts" sounds the key note of a long soliloquy in "The

Second Part of Henry the Sixth" (III, 1, 331-383), a speech containing this significant passage:

"Faster than spring-time showers comes thought on thought,  
And not a thought but thinks on dignity.  
My brain more busy than the laboring spider  
Weaves tedious snares to trap mine enemies."

Equally clear is the implication of thinking in the opening speech by Richard the Third, terminated with the abrupt conclusion, "Dive, thoughts, down to my soul." Schlegel defends the soliloquy on the grounds that "the poet has the right in soliloquies to lend a voice to the most hidden thoughts,"<sup>23</sup> and Brandes expresses a similar idea when he affirms that "the monolog, as a whole, is a non-realistic unfolding of secret thoughts in words."<sup>24</sup>

There is sustained emphasis on the thought element in the soliloquy of Richard the Second in which he lays bare the workings of his brain (V, 5, 1-66):

"My brain I'll prove the female to my soul,  
My soul the father; and these two beget  
A generation of still-breeding thoughts."

"Thoughts of things divine" turn his attention to some perplexities occasioned by the holy word. "Thoughts tending to ambition" strive in vain to find a way out of his prison. "Thoughts tending to content" comfort him with the assurance that misery has company. Thereupon the unhappy king's imagination wiles away the time, one of his fancies being that his thoughts are minutes.

Thought is the key note of several other Shakespearean soliloquies. Enobarbus, for example, has a premonition that sorrowful meditation will cause his death:

"This blows my heart.  
If swift thought break it not, a swifter mean  
Shall outstrike thought; but thought will do't, I feel"  
(IV, 6, 34-36).

<sup>23</sup> *Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature*, translated by J. Black, p. 435.

<sup>24</sup> *William Shakespeare*, p. 127.



But the passage which proves that Shakespeare recognized the soliloquy as a device for revealing inaudible thoughts is the episode in which Macbeth ponders on the prophecy of the weird sisters (I, 3). He is horrified by the first temptation to crime, the "thought whose murder yet is but fantastical." While he soliloquizes, the others watch him closely, but they are unconscious that he is speaking: "Look, how our partner's rapt," says Banquo, and the object of their gaze, oblivious to onlookers, continues his meditations. When he realizes his lapse in etiquette, he apologizes, not for talking, but for thinking:

"Give me your favor; my dull brain was wrought  
With things forgotten" (I, 3, 149-150).

#### THE SETTING OF THE INTROSPECTIVE SOLILOQUY

The soliloquizer's assertion that he is thinking is not the only method of differentiating the introspective soliloquy from dialog. A commonplace sentence preceding the monolog, one following it, and also, occasionally, brief interruptions serve as a contrast to exalted and intensive musings. Such short sentences, usually directions to servants, are by no means original with Shakespeare, but they become thoroughly conventionalized by his usage. Accordingly, a study of the reflective soliloquy cannot neglect this contrivance which effects its setting.

The introspective soliloquy is often preceded by a direction to a servant or to a social inferior. Pericles bids his lords to let none disturb him, and then, alone, he instantly ponders on his change of thoughts (I, 2, 1-3). So Bajazet, at the opening of "Selimus," directs his lords to leave him, whereupon he proceeds to 'unrip the thoughts that harbor in his breast.' The same device occurs in Hamlet's speech,

"Leave me, friend. (Exeunt all but Hamlet.)  
'Tis now the very witching time of night" (III, 2, 405-406).

So Macbeth's

"Get thee to bed. (Exit Servant.)  
Is this a dagger which I see before me?" (II, 1, 32-33)

illustrates the antithetical juxtaposition, frequent in Shakespeare,<sup>25</sup> of the commonplace direction to an attendant and the revelation of the inmost ideas and feelings.

The interruption of a soliloquy by a call to a servant also creates the appearance of a distinction between speech and thought. The calls of Brutus to Lucius (II, 1, 1, 3, 5), Antony to Eros (IV, 14, 50, 54), and Macbeth to Seyton (V, 3, 19, 20, 29) may, or may not, have been intended to represent speech as contrasted with the introspection and emotion of the soliloquies in which they are imbedded, but this, assuredly, is the effect produced.

"Seyton!—I am sick at heart  
When I behold—Seyton, I say!"—

the profound melancholy of Macbeth's retrospection is vivified by the summons which serves as a setting for the monolog, opening, interrupting and closing it. Likewise the soliloquies of Brutus and Antony are concluded as well as interrupted by the summons.

The summons is a favorite method of terminating the soliloquy among the Elizabethans. The first conspicuous use of the summons-close is in two soliloquies by Tancred in "Gismond of Salerne" (IV, 2, 84, 120). Here the effect is startling, the abrupt call giving the impression of articulate speech following hard upon a whirlwind of passionate cogitation. Shakespeare's predecessors often use the device,—for example, the conclusion of the opening soliloquy of Marlowe's Faustus:

"Here, Faustus, tire thy brains to gain a deity.  
Wagner!"

Similarly, Julia of "The Two Gentlemen of Verona" (I, 2, 66), Oliver of "As You Like It" (I, 1, 92), the Senator of "Timon" (II, 1, 13-14) and Antony of "Antony and Cleopatra" (I, 2, 134) break off their meditations by calling out the name of a servant who instantly appears. Three of Antony's soliloquies are terminated by a cry to Eros, who presents himself on the last occasion (IV, 12, 30, 48; IV, 14, 54).

<sup>25</sup> Other examples: *Macbeth*, III, 1, 48; III, 1, 140; V, 3, 19. *Hamlet*, IV, 4, 31-32. *Lear*, III, 4, 26.

Sometimes the summoning of a servant is effected by some such phrase as "Within here!" used by Marlowe's Barabas (V, 3) or "Who's there within?" which ends the meditations of Tiberius in Jonson's "Sejanus" (III, 3). "Who's within?" abruptly cries Shakespeare's Julius Caesar (II, 2, 3); "Who's there?" demands Macbeth (III, 1, 72); and "Who attends us there?" asks Antiochus of "Pericles" (I, 1, 150). In each case, there is an immediate response from the servant, and thus is accomplished with no apparent incongruity a quick and dramatic transition from revery to action.

The soliloquizer occasionally summons a character other than a servant, in plays of various nations and periods. Shakespeare's Romeo summons the Apothecary at the end of his soliloquy (V, 1, 57) just as Marlowe's Guise summons the Apothecary at the end of his, in "The Massacre of Paris" (I, 2). The same device enables Eglamour of "The Two Gentlemen of Verona" to entreat the presence of his lady (IV, 3, 3), and Thersites to hail Achilles (II, 3, 23).

The summons is not the only form of close for the introspective soliloquy which gives the effect of a breaking into speech. The same function is often performed by the prepared entrance,<sup>26</sup>—most conspicuously in Gloucester's "Dive, thoughts, down to my soul; here Clarence comes" (I, 1, 41). Hamlet's "soft you now! the fair Ophelia!" (III, 1, 88-89) is a more graceful transitoin. "But, hush! no more," Banquo admonishes himself, as the sennet is sounded preceding the royal entrance (III, 1, 10).

Sometimes the soliloquizer is interrupted in such a way as to mark the contrast between meditation and conversation. In the midst of dialog, Richard the Third (IV, 2, 98-110) and Macbeth (I, 3, 116-147) lapse into revery, and they are brought back to reality only by their companions' insistent addresses. Rarely is the soliloquy interrupted by the speech of one entering, as in the case of the passionate outbursts of Troilus, which are cut short by the chattering Pandarus (III, 2, 30, 41). The interruption may be occasioned by the entrance of a servant who is accosted by the soliloquizer in a

<sup>26</sup> See *ante*, p. 55.

matter-of-fact way, producing an effect similar to that of the summons. Thus Mark Antony's grandiose curse over the corpse of Caesar is broken off, upon the entrance of Octavius' servant, with "You serve Octavius Caesar, do you not?" (III, I, 276).<sup>27</sup> Again, Richard the Third's frenzied communion with his conscience is interrupted by Ratcliffe's morning salutation (V, 3, 207). Most impressive is the transition caused by the entrance of Macbeth (I, 5, 55): the direful monody of Lady Macbeth is wrought to a period of climactic fervor in the awful cry, "Hold! hold!"—whereupon, her husband appearing, her majestic salutation,

"Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!  
Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!"

preserves the dignity of the discourse, while adjusting its mood to the tone of conversation.

#### MORALIZING

The setting of the introspective soliloquy, usually suggested by a word to a servant preceding, succeeding or during its progress, is a significant accessory, but naturally its importance is subservient to the content of the soliloquy itself. One prominent characteristic of Shakespearean meditations is their moralizing, doubtless due in part to the preceding and contemporary vogue of the morality play. Almost every morality, early and late, contains monologic sermonizings. Then, too, the British temperament has a deep-rooted sense of right and wrong, indicated in all of its literature. Add to this the pervasive influence of the Bible—especially of Ecclesiastes, the Psalms, the Proverbs and the soliloquies of Job—and the moralizing tendency in Shakespeare's soliloquies seems inevitable. It is noteworthy, however, that his predecessors devote considerably less attention to moralizing than he; and therefore the truths which his monologists utter, as well as the manner of the utterance may be attributed in large measure to the dramatist's sense of proportion in ethics as well as aesthetics.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. *Julius Caesar*, III, 2, 266; *Measure for Measure*, II, 4, 17, 30; *Macbeth*, I, 5, 32.

The classical drama had made its contribution to the aesthetic aspect of moralizing. Particularly in Sophocles, the serene statement of elemental truths as imaged in nature presages Shakespeare's philosophizing on kindred themes. For example, the moralizing of Ajax: "Dread things and things most potent bow to office; thus it is that snow-strewn winter gives place to fruitful summer; and thus night's weary round makes room for day with her white steeds to kindle light; and the breath of dreadful winds can allow the groaning sea to slumber; and, like the rest, almighty Sleep looses whom he has bound, nor holds with a perpetual grasp."<sup>28</sup>

The Senecan conception of unhappy majesty inspires a soliloquy inserted by Kinwelmersh in "Jocasta" (I, 2, 1-18), the idea being borrowed from Ludovico Dolce.<sup>29</sup> The same thought animates the moralizing of the King in the "Sákuntalá" of Kálidása,<sup>30</sup> as well as many Shakespearean soliloquies. Kinwelmersh, philosophizing on the trouble underlying the apparent splendor of court life, mentions

"The chambers huge, the goodly gorgeous beddes,  
The gilted roofes embowde with curious worke"—

details somewhat suggestive of Shakespeare's "perfumed chambers of the great" and the "canopies of costly state" ("Henry IV," Part II, III, 1, 11-12).

The sad lot of the king, his inability to sleep and to enjoy the life of the humble, is a favorite text for moralizing in the early work of Shakespeare. Henry the Sixth envies the simple life of the shepherd:

"Gives not the hawthorn-bush a sweeter shade  
To shepherds looking on their silly sheep,  
Than doth a rich embroider'd canopy  
To kings that fear their subjects' treachery?"

(Part III, II, 5, 42-45.)

The thought, elaborated by Henry (II, 21-54) is converted by Warwick to the theme of Ecclesiastes: "Why, what is pomp,

<sup>28</sup> *Tragedies*, translated by R. C. Jebb, p. 197.

<sup>29</sup> *Jocasta*, edited by J. W. Cunliffe, p. 156.

<sup>30</sup> Translation of Monier Williams, p. 111.

rule, reign, but earth and dust?" (V, 2, 27), and Brackenbury of "Richard the Third" has a similar conviction: "Princes have but their titles for their glories" (I, 4, 78). Ceremony, says Henry the Fifth in striking phrase, in the sole distinction of the great (IV, 1, 255-301). Like Henry the Sixth, he laments the 'infinite heart's-ease which kings neglect and private men enjoy.' Instead of being colored with pastoral idealism, however, his conception of the poor man's bliss is rather tinctured with a satiric realism, evidenced in the reference to

"The wretched slave,  
Who with a body fill'd and vacant mind  
Gets him to rest, cramm'd with distressful bread."

The inability of majesty to sleep, remarked by Henry the Sixth and Henry the Fifth, is the motif of that beautiful soliloquy by Henry the Fourth:

"How many thousand of my poorest subjects  
Are at this hour asleep" (Part II, III, 1, 4-31).

All three deplore the inconsistency of Sleep in favoring the loathsome bed rather than the kingly couch, but Henry the Fourth's imagination is stirred to the noblest utterance. In the rush of metaphor attendant upon the vision of the sleeping sea-boy, philosophizing is forgotten until the concluding thought:

"Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown."

After 1599, the theme of unhappy majesty disappears from the Shakespearean soliloquy, and it is succeeded in the next few years by occasional moralizings on love. Claudio of "Much Ado" laments that

"Friendship is constant in all other things  
Save in the office and affairs of love" (II, 1, 182-183).

Helena of "All's Well" ponders on the text, "Amor vincit omnia":

"The mightiest space in fortune nature brings  
To join like likes and kiss like native things" (I, 1, 237-8),

and the Countess, observing Helena's passion, remarks:

"It is the sign and seal of nature's truth,  
When love's strong passion is impress'd in youth" (I, 3, 138-9).

A more sophisticated view of courtship occurs in Cressida's well-known "Women are angels wooing" (I, 3, 308-321).

The sententious observations of Shakespeare's soliloquizers are by no means confined to the subject of love. Indeed, the moralizing of the middle period of the poet's productions is concerned with a variety of ethical truisms. Friar Laurence, musing on the powerful grace of plants, herbs and stones, draws some interesting conclusions on the virtue of vice and the vice of virtue (II, 3, 17-22). This kind of chiasmus paradox, a favorite device with Elizabethans, reappears in "Twelfth Night" when Viola comments on the folly of wisdom and the wisdom of folly (III, 1, 74-75). "Julius Caesar" abounds in proverbs on conduct:

"Who so firm that cannot be seduc'd?" (I, 2, 316);  
"It is the bright day that brings forth the adder and that craves  
wary walking" (II, 1, 15);  
"The abuse of greatness is, when it disjoins  
Remorse from power" (II, 1, 18-19).

Brutus is addicted to lengthier moralizings in the famous passages on Ambition (II, 1, 19-27), Conspiracy (ll. 77-85), and "Between the acting of a dreadful thing and the first motion" (ll. 61-69). The Duke of "Measure for Measure" has a meditation in the form of a gnomic poem (III, 2, 275-290), containing two thoughts appearing as epigrams:

"He who the sword of heaven will bear  
Should be as holy as severe,"

and

"O, what may man within him hide,  
Though angel on the outward side!"

This drama contains many moral epigrams: Isabella's on the despot's power to sin (II, 4, 171-177), and Angelo's on the temptation "to sin in loving virtue" (II, 2, 180-183), the empty authority of place and form (II, 4, 12-15), and the unhappiness resulting from sin (IV, 4, 36-37),—a conviction

also given utterance by Lady Macbeth (III, 2, 4-7) and by Hamlet's mother (IV, 5, 19-20). The wages of sin are more profoundly weighed by Hamlet's uncle-father in his assertion of divine judgment (III, 3, 57-64). His "words without thoughts never to heaven go" (III, 3, 98) has become as proverbial as Hamlet's "Foul deeds will rise" (I, 2, 257). The saying, "Frailty, thy name is woman," (I, 2, 146) it is interesting to note, has counterparts not only in Virgil's "Varium et mutabile semper femina," but also in the Sanskrit "Mudrá-Rákshasa," when Rakshasa soliloquizes, "Women are as unsteady as the buds that float in air."<sup>21</sup>

With "Hamlet" there appears a slight change in the tone and form of the moralizing. The ethical attitude becomes intellectualized, and the expression of the thought is only occasionally epigrammatic. Except for the few proverbial expressions noted, the ideas of the soliloquies of "Hamlet" are so deftly woven into the tragic theme that they cannot be set apart as philosophizings. To be sure, Hamlet's "What a piece of work is man!" (IV, 4, 33-39) may be separated from the context, but nevertheless it is a spontaneous observation in which blood and judgment are so well commingled that there is not a trace of the epigrammatic quality. Likewise Iago's cool generalizations on the inflammability of jealousy (III, 3, 322-324, 326-329) are marked by a distinction alien to the proverbial utterance. Lear's "Take physic, pomp" (III, 4, 33-36) discloses a feeling of fraternity characteristic of this period of the author's work. The same idea animates Edgar's rimed paraphrase of the thought that misery likes company (III, 6, 109-114) and his involved philosophizing on the blessings of "the lowest and most dejected thing of fortune" (IV, 1, 3-6). The change from the epigrammatic to the analytical is illustrated by Edmund's ironic dissertation on the text, "The fault is not in our stars but in ourselves that we are underlings" (I, 2, 128-145),—a text which Helena of "All's Well" had thus epitomized:

"Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie,  
Which we ascribe to heaven" (I, 1, 231-232).

<sup>21</sup> *Theater of the Hindus*, Vol. II, p. 175.



Naturally, proverbial expressions do not totally disappear from the soliloquies following "Hamlet." Pericles, for example, ponders, "One sin, I know, another doth provoke" (I, 1, 137-142); yet he presently philosophizes on "the passions of the mind" which are conceived by fear and nourished by care (I, 2, 11-15). Such psychological abstractions are frequent. Enobarbus of "Antony and Cleopatra" observes that "to be furious is to be frightened out of fear" (III, 12, 195-196), and Antony comes to a realization that human desires are often regulated by their opposites (I, 2, 127-130). Imogen, the gentle philosopher of "Cymbeline," reverts in a somewhat epigrammatic vein to the democratic interests of "Lear," noting, like Edgar, the blessing of the humble (I, 6, 7-9), asserting that "falsehood is worse in kings than beggars," and that "hardness ever of hardness is mother" (III, 6, 13-14, 19-22).

In the latest group of plays, the intellectual attitude is deeply tinged with misanthropy. A servant of "Timon of Athens" moralizes on man politic, concluding with the ironic jest, "Who cannot keep his wealth must keep his house" (III, 3, 42).<sup>31a</sup> Flavius of the same piece comments on the wretchedness brought by riches (IV, 2, 30-36),<sup>31a</sup> and Timon morosely philosophizes on the hollowness of social distinctions (IV, 3, 3-13), the universality of flattery (ll. 13-20), and the baneful power of gold (ll. 26-41). Equally cynical are Cloten's soliloquizing on the same evil authority of gold (II, 3, 72-78). Coriolanus satirically rails against custom (II, 3, 124-130) and bitterly observes the frailty of friendship (IV, 4, 12-22). The bitterness of Wolsey's farewell in "Henry the Eighth" is tempered with resignation, as he laments the instability of fame (III, 2, 352-358) and the fickle favor of princes (ll. 366-372); but the change of mood is doubtless due to a change of authorship, these soliloquies probably being the work of John Fletcher.

Thus the moralizing swings a full circle, beginning with the conventionally sympathetic attitude toward the unhappiness of

<sup>31a</sup> It should be borne in mind that these soliloquies are spurious—see E. H. Wright's "The Authorship of Timon of Athens," pp. 42, 46—whereas Timon's soliloquies are undoubtedly Shakespeare's.

monarchs, but soon abandoning these long and ornamental speeches for sententious and epigrammatic truisms on love and ethics, these in turn giving way to more intimate and intellectual philosophizings on human conduct, and these supplanted by the bitterly misanthropic broodings which conclude with the poignant lament on "that poor man that hangs on princes' favors!" How far these moods are autobiographical is a matter of speculation rather than investigation. The question might provoke debates as keen as those which have raged in regard to the sonnets. Unquestionably the moralizings show a progress in technic as well as in thought. The conventional and the ornate gradually give place to an intensive and spontaneous expression of ideas.

#### THE WORKINGS OF CONSCIENCE

More introspective than philosophical generalization, however, is the depiction of the working of conscience. This in an old function of the soliloquy, as evidenced by "The Toy-Cart," when Sárvilaka ponders,

"Thus guilty conscience makes me fear, for man  
Is ever frightened by his own offences."<sup>22</sup>

The translator observes that the passage might be rendered, "Thus conscience does made cowards of us all," but, in that case, "conscience" would not have Hamlet's meaning of "thinking." The modern significance of "conscience" occurs in Shakespeare, however,—doubly redoubled in Richard the Third's terrified cry,

"My conscience hath a thousand several tongues  
And every tongue brings in a several tale;  
And every tale condemns me for a villain" (V, 3, 193-195).

Here feeling outweighs thought; nevertheless it is often difficult to distinguish between introspective moralizing and the portrayal of conscience. For example, the pondering of Brutus on the interim "between the acting of a dreadful thing and the first motion" (II, I, 63-69) and his meditation on the shame of conspiracy (II, I, 77-85) are revelations not only of his philosophical temperament but also of his own conscience at work.

<sup>22</sup> *Theater of the Hindus*, Vol. I, p. 73.

On the other hand, Angelo's pondering preliminary to crime shows a distinct consciousness of the wickedness of his designs (II, 2, 162-187). One soliloquy is entirely devoted to the pleas and upbraidings of conscience, ultimately conquered by lawless passion. His next meditation continues the revelation of "the strong and swelling evil of his conception" (II, 4, 1-17). Like Claudius, he laments that heaven has his empty words. Finally Angelo's "This deed unshapes me quite" (IV, 4, 22, 37) shows his realization of the futility of violating the injunctions of conscience:

"Alack, when once our grace we have forgot,  
Nothing goes right; we would, and we would not."

The same mood characterizes Lady Macbeth's "Nought's had, all's spent" (III, 2, 4-7), and the exclamation of Hamlet's mother,

"To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,  
Each toy seems prolog to some great amiss" (IV, 5, 17-18).

The world-weariness of Macbeth in his resignation to his empty greatness and his loveless lot (V, 3, 19-28) eloquently bespeaks the workings of his conscience. It is a sermon in little, psychologically and ethically sound, and so simply phrased that it seems the welling of the heart. This master stroke Davenant omitted in his version of the drama,—a fact indicating the variability of human judgment.

The contrition of the murderer, implied in Macbeth's lament, is clearly depicted in that of the King of "Hamlet" when he is attempting to pray (III, 3, 36-72). "O my offence is rank, it smells to heaven"—every syllable seems racked with pain. The poignant regret of the murderer is not a new theme in English soliloquy—it occurs as early as the Hegge play of "Noah and Lamech"<sup>88</sup>—but nowhere is there a more pathetic revelation of contrition. Self-abnegation, conviction as to the judgment of heaven, despair, hope,—thus is the conscience of the King revealed in his struggle to speak to his Master. The murderer's repentance is also disclosed in the soliloquy of Posthumus (V, 1, 1-33), but, as befits the piece and the occa-

<sup>88</sup> Manly, Vol. I, p. 38, ll. 190-197.

sion, his laments and invocations appear more rhetorical and less sincere than the soliloquizing of Claudius.

#### THE DEBATE

The philosophical tone of the moralizing soliloquy becomes intimately introspective in the depiction of the workings of conscience, but even a more profound impression of tense thinking is sometimes produced by those dramatic meditations which assume the form of debate. We have already observed a travesty of the type in Launcelot Gobbo's colloquy with the fiend and his conscience.<sup>34</sup> The serious presentation of argumentative reflection most closely approaches the original meaning of soliloquy. St. Augustine, who coined the word "soliloquy," applies it to a debate between "Augustinus" and "Ratio," and in King Alfred's preface to his translation called "Blossom-Gatherings from St. Augustine," he thus expounds the term: "The books are called *Soliloquiorum*, that is, of his mind's musing and doubting; how his Reason answered his Mind, when the mind doubted about anything, or wished to know anything which it clearly could not understand before."

Whether or not to commit murder is the chief subject on which the argumentative soliloquizer ponders in Shakespeare, —a theme doubtless due to the soliloquies of contemporary revenge plays. In this respect Shakespeare was again in agreement with his fellow-dramatists. Horestes ponders,

" Shall I revenged be  
Of good Kinge Agamemnon's death, ye goddes declare to me!  
Or shall I let the adulterous dame styll wallow in her sin? "<sup>35</sup>

In the opening speech by the protagonist of "Hoffman," the soliloquizer, like Hamlet, laments his "tardy aim to do an act which justice and a father's death excite." The soliloquizing Promos of "Promos and Cassandra" debates *pro* and *con* the question, "Shall Andrugio live?" deciding in the negative.<sup>36</sup>

The theme of Hamlet's broodings is foreshadowed in Shakespeare as well as in his predecessors. The cogitation of Brutus

<sup>34</sup> See *ante*, p. 128.

<sup>35</sup> *Quellen*, edited by A. Brandl, p. 499.

<sup>36</sup> *Six Old Plays*, edited by G. Stevens, Vol. I, p. 40.

on the assassination of Caesar (II, 1) and Angelo's pondering on killing Isabella's brother (II, 2, 175) are potentially debates on murder, although the real issue is obscured by lofty patriotism in the one case and by a consuming passion in the other. Criticism has recognized Hamlet's tendency toward excessive reflection, but it has not stressed the fact that the underlying motive of nearly all of his meditations is the questioning of his intention to kill Claudius. Two soliloquies bring the issue to head. One (III, 3, 73-96) begins with the determination, "now I'll do't," but pauses to debate the efficacy of revenge at such a moment, the thought becoming involved in the absurdities of medieval theology and concluding with a postponement of the act. The other soliloquy (IV, 4, 32-66) revives the question of vengeance. His analyses of his thoughts and feelings, his reasoning on the reasons which retard and spur his dull revenge, although marshalled as an invincible argument arraigning his vacillation, nevertheless portray the culmination of a tremendous internal conflict.

Macbeth has two soliloquies in which he ponders murder. In the first (I, 7, 1-28), he weighs the consequences of his deed in this life, enumerating the reasons for refraining, and feebly opposing these glowing arguments with "only vaulting ambition." The other soliloquy (III, 1, 48-72) is not clearly argumentative, nor is the purpose of murder frankly stated until the ensuing dialog; yet the ideas form a chain of thought pointing toward the killing of Banquo. Both reveries, couched in resplendent diction and daring metaphor, lay bare the mental processes of the villain, drunk with sentimental fear, pity and egoism. The figure of

"Pity like a naked new-born babe  
Striding the blast"

is admirably characterized by Mr. Story<sup>87</sup> as "the product of an unrestrained imagination which exhausts itself in the utterance."

Even Hamlet's "To be or not to be" (III, 1, 56-88), plain as is the implication of the opening phrase, has been inter-

<sup>87</sup> *Excursions in Art and Letters*, by W. W. Story, p. 256.

preted by the practical common sense of Dr. Johnson and the astute scholarship of Professor Lewis as another illustration of the contemplation of murder: "Hamlet is thinking not of committing suicide but of actively pursuing his revenge."<sup>38</sup> Professor Lewis, who ingeniously champions the theory, admits, however, that "unless we are misled by printers' omissions, the Hamlet of the First Quarto is certainly meditating suicide." The transposition of the soliloquy<sup>39</sup> and the alterations of the text do not appear to warrant the complete change of meaning and therefore we shall proceed on the assumption, ratified by the consensus of opinion of three centuries, that "To be or not to be" debates the question of self-slaughter.

The motive is not a new one. The Sanskrit drama, which affords precedents for practically all types of Shakespearean soliloquies, is no exception in this case, as both the "Uttara-Rāma-Charitra"<sup>40</sup> and the "Mudrá-Rākshasa"<sup>40</sup> contain soliloquizers who contemplate suicide and conclude not to take the step. A crude predecessor of Hamlet's meditation is found in Hieronimo's soliloquizing in "The Spanish Tragedy":

"This way, or that way? soft and faire, not so!  
For if I hang or kill myselfe, lets know  
Who will revenge Horatios murther then!  
No, no, fie, no! pardon me, ile none of that,—" (III, 12).

and he flings away his dagger and halter.

Hamlet's brooding lacks such objective illumination. Indeed the fact that a totally different interpretation of the theme has been maintained with an appearance of plausibility is in itself significant of its subjectivity, and so is the evidence that the meaning of nearly every line has been vigorously contested.<sup>41</sup> To complete the paradox, it is only necessary to observe that the phrasing is simple throughout, the thought sequential and the general import transparently clear. Wherefore, then, the difficulty in specific interpretation?

<sup>38</sup> Charlton M. Lewis, *The Genesis of Hamlet*, p. 100 ff.

<sup>39</sup> See *ante*, p. 35.

<sup>40</sup> *Theater of the Hindus*, Vol. I, p. 342; Vol. II, p. 234.

<sup>41</sup> Furness Variorum Edition of *Hamlet*, Vol. I, pp. 204-215.

The soliloquy is profoundly introspective, the form of debate adding intensity to the musing. The question is tersely put (l. 56) and graphically expanded (57-60); then the advocate for the negative makes a moving plea for non-existence (60-64); the rest of the colloquy is devoted to the reply of the affirmative, who begins tentatively, apparently granting his opponent's point, but proceeds with increasing conviction to develop a line of reasoning showing, not why man should be, but why he is; the conclusion (84-88) terminates the argument of the affirmative and apparently indicates the decision of the judge.

Albeit the soliloquy lends itself to analysis in terms of argumentation, its expression is tinged with an elusive quality giving the impression of a melancholy and pensive mood. The clarity is of thought rather than of articulate speech. Feelings and ideas are indelibly transmitted, but, as to their precise meaning, doctors disagree. The impression of thoughts without words was destroyed for Charles Lamb by hearing the soliloquy "spouted," "handled and pawed about by declamatory boys and men."<sup>42</sup> The commentator Bailey was so imbued with the introspective attitude of the soliloquizer that he objected to Hamlet's word "say" (l. 61) as an interruption to the train of thought;<sup>43</sup> and even the hard-headed Dr. Johnson comprehended this soliloquy as a conventional symbol for revealing mental processes: "This celebrated soliloquy, bursting from a man distracted with contrariety of desire, and overwhelmed with the magnitude of his own purposes, is connected rather in the speaker's mind than on his tongue."<sup>44</sup> Herein is the genius of the speech; so worded that it appears the outpouring of a tortured spirit, it quickens imagination and sympathy and awakens a response of mind and soul.

#### THE REVELATION OF INSANITY

The line separating introspection from insanity is difficult to determine, as evidenced by the voluminous controversy on

<sup>42</sup> *The Works of Charles and Mary Lamb*, edited by E. V. Lucas, Vol. I, p. 199.

<sup>43</sup> *Furness Variorum Hamlet*, Vol. I, p. 209.

<sup>44</sup> *Furness Variorum Hamlet*, Vol. I, p. 204.

Hamlet's madness. It is unnecessary to revive the question other than to state the modern attitude on the subject, succinctly set forth by Professor Tolman: "I believe that the debate on this topic concerns largely the use of terms, the definition of madness; and that it often indicates no fundamental difference between the opposing sides. Hamlet is sane enough to be the responsible hero of a great tragedy. He is not sane enough to be pronounced rational by the experts: few are."<sup>45</sup>

If there is any point of the tragedy at which Hamlet loses control of his faculties, it is after the revelations made by the ghost. In the ensuing soliloquy (I, 5, 92-112) and dialog, Hamlet's wild and whirling words indicate a reaction after tense strain which might be diagnosed as temporary disturbance of the mental faculties. This soliloquy is used by critics as evidence of sanity and insanity.<sup>46</sup>—a fact which suggests that the speaker is on the verge of an emotional collapse.

"O all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?  
And shall I couple hell?"—

such impotent ragings show his distraction, but with "O, fie! Hold, my heart!" he regains a measure of self-control, which, by focusing his attention on the parting injunction of the ghost (ll. 95, 97, 111), he retains to the end of the speech.

The soliloquy is often used in Elizabethan drama to suggest the border between sanity and insanity. The ragings of the vengeful Hieronimo in "The Spanish Tragedy" occasionally break the bonds of reason. In Greene's "Orlando Furioso," the monolog, "Woods, trees, leaves; leaves, trees, woods,"<sup>47</sup> reveals the hero's madness, while two soliloquies<sup>48</sup> indicate his dawning reason, as he discourses on his dreams and forthwith recovers from his lunacy. So Lear's "Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks!" (III, 2, 1-9, 14-25) depicts such turbulent emotion that it may be regarded as the first sign of insanity,

<sup>45</sup> *The Views about Hamlet*, by Albert H. Tolman, p. 14.

<sup>46</sup> *Furness Variorum Hamlet*, Vol. I, p. 107 (Hunter); Vol. II, pp. 197 (Boswell), 199 (Farren), 200, 208 (Dr. Bucknell), 216 (Dr. Kellogg), 224 (Dr. Stearns), 225 (Arthur Meadows), 230 (G. H. Lewes).

<sup>47</sup> *Plays and Poems of Robert Greene*, edited by J. C. Collins, Vol. I, p. 245.

<sup>48</sup> U. s., p. 256.



although his next soliloquy (III, 4, 26-36) is thoroughly rational.

A monolog must contain an element of consciousness if it is to be considered a soliloquy. Accordingly the ravings of Ophelia (IV, 5) and the somniloquy of Lady Macbeth (V, 1) do not come within the jurisdiction of this discussion. There is a form of monolog, however, the distinguishing feature of which is the fact that the speaker, for the moment, is unconscious of the presence of others on the stage. This soliloquy we may term the "trance."

#### THE TRANCE

The trance is so called because the soliloquizer appears entranced by his meditations and totally oblivious to the people near him. At the same time, it is evident that the soliloquizer is keenly alive to his own thoughts,—a state of affairs not applicable to the monologs of Ophelia (IV, 5) and Lady Macbeth (V, 1). The trance often occurs in Greek tragedy when the soliloquizer tells his tale to the air, unconscious of the proximity of attendant or chorus. There are two notable instances of the device in the drama immediately preceding Shakespeare: one at the close of Peele's "David and Bethsabe," where David, oblivious to his wife and his friends and their train, communes with the spirit of his beloved Absolon;<sup>49</sup> the other is the exquisitely poignant, "Black is the beauty of the brightest day," uttered by Tamburlaine in the presence of his sick wife, their three sons, three kings and three physicians (Part II, II, 4).

Macbeth's reverie on the predictions of the weird sisters, forgetful of the presence of Banquo, Ross and Angus (I, 3, 116-117, 127-129, 143-144, 146-147) is a slightly different kind of trance, since the isolation, no less complete than that of David and of Tamburlaine, is produced by a thoughtful rather than a passionate mood. Richard the Third's meditation, disregarding the importunities of Buckingham (IV, 2, 98-104, 106-110) does not indicate such complete absorption, but it may be styled a trance. Lear's ravings just noted (III, 2)

<sup>49</sup> Manly, Vol. II, p. 486, ll. 257-276.

afford an excellent illustration of the trance. As pointed out by Delius, "the company of the Fool, with whom he enters on the heath, is not to be considered as company, since Lear himself takes no notice of him: Lear is alone and feels himself the more so, abandoned to the storm and violence of the unrestrained elements, which he dares to outbid with the storm and violence of his soul."<sup>80</sup>

There are many instances in Shakespeare and his contemporaries of momentary trances in the midst of dialog,—for example, Imogen's apostrophe to Posthumus, interrupting her conversation with Pisanio (III, 4, 90-98). Trances over the dead are likewise numerous: Cleopatra's frenzied appeal to Antony (IV, 15, 63-68), Othello's passionate adieu to Desdemona (V, 2, 358-359), and Horatio's tender farewell to Hamlet (V, 2, 370-371) are all soliloquies uttered in the midst of a crowd. But these outbursts belong to the realm of the passions rather than of thought.

#### DEPICTION OF THE PASSIONS

In the soliloquy, as in every human document, there is a natural intermingling of thought and feeling, and therefore the segregation of thought and passion is an arbitrary arrangement for convenience of discussion. Grief, love, jealousy, revenge, hate and fear,—these six passions conspicuously animate the Shakespearean soliloquy, and these we shall briefly note.

#### GRIEF

Grief is the motive force of the most ancient soliloquies of tragedy. Aeschylus' Prometheus, bound to the rocks, bewails his plight, and, in general, lamentation is the usual mode of expression in the soliloquies of the "tragic triad of immortal fames." Seneca preserves the tradition and the early Elizabethans follow his lead. Claudia of "Gismond of Salerne" is assigned a soliloquy (III, 2, 1-50) which is a literary exercise in lamentation, borrowed from snatches of Seneca's

<sup>80</sup> Nicolaus Delius, "Über den Monolog in Shakespeare's Dramen," *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, Vol. XVI, p. 16.

"Phaedra,"<sup>81</sup> and opened and concluded with favorite expressions of Chaucer's. Less elaboration and more sincerity characterizes some of the soliloquies in the beginnings of English drama,—for example, the lamentation of Mary Magdalene at the tomb, which opens the Coventry play of "Christ appearing to Mary," and the soliloquies with which Everyman mourns the departure of his companions.

A more personal note of suffering is sounded in the Shakespearean lamentation. Hamlet's "O, that this too too solid flesh would melt" (I, 2, 129-159) seems the quintessence of world-weariness, while equally heart-felt is Ophelia's gentle plaint, "O, what a noble mind is here o'er-thrown!" (III, 1, 158-169). More sentimental and ornamental is the dying speech of Enobarbus, who lays bare his heart

"Which, being dried with grief, will break to powder,  
And finish all foul thoughts" (IV, 9, 17-18).

Death soliloquies and lamentations over the dead<sup>82</sup> depict grief in varying degrees of intensity. Wolsey's farewells to his greatness (III, 2, 222-227, 350-372) reveal sorrow tempered by resignation.

#### LOVE

A frequent form of the lament is the lover's complaint, charmingly expressed in the "Sákuntalá" of Kálidása,<sup>83</sup> and poignantly uttered by Rostand's Cyrano underneath the balcony (III, 9). In the early eighteenth century, the Earl of Mulgrave bewailed the fact that

"Our lovers, talking to themselves, for want  
Of friends, make all the Pit their Confidant."<sup>84</sup>

Every age attests the popularity of this type of soliloquy, but particularly in the renaissance it flowers in tragedy, comedy, romance, sonnet and novella. Accordingly the extraordinary dexterity, variety, warmth and color of the soliloquies of

<sup>81</sup> J. W. Cunliffe, "Gismond of Salerne," *Pub. of Mod. Lang. As.*, New Series, Vol. XIV, No. 2, p. 452.

<sup>82</sup> See *ante*, p. 76.

<sup>83</sup> Translation of Monier Williams, pp. 55, 73.

<sup>84</sup> *An Essay on Poetry*, London, 1717, p. 308.

Shakespearean lovers is explicable in part as a culmination of one aspect of the renaissance movement in England.

The caprice of Protean love is depicted in "The Two Gentlemen of Verona" (II, 4, 191-214; II, 6, 1-26). Valentine's "And why not death rather than living torment?" (III, 1, 170-187) illustrates the juggling of phrase and fancy popular in the contemporary plaint of the love-sick swain; while his "O thou that dost inhabit in my breast" (V, 4, 7-12) has the conventional forest setting. Likewise the sonneteering lovers of "Love's Labor's Lost" (IV, 3) have the park as a background, and Orlando hangs his verses on the trees and carves his sweetheart's name in the bark (III, 2, 1-10).

Aaron's passion mounts with the rising sun (II, 1, 1-24) and Romeo's imagination is set aflame with the fancy that Juliet is the sun (II, 2, 2-25). Then he likens her to "a winged messenger of heaven" (II, 2, 26-32), bewails the absence of her light (II, 156-158) and wishes her a lover-like "Good night" (II, 187-188). Troilus, musing, also pictures his love by aid of resplendent imagery: "Her bed is India; there she lies, a pearl" (I, 1, 103-107), and his passion takes fire in the soliloquies, "I am giddy; expectation whirls me round" (III, 2, 19-30) and "Even such a passion doth embrace my bosom" (III, 2, 37-41). Antony's passion for Cleopatra transcends the death which momentarily separates them:

"Where souls do couch on flowers, we'll hand in hand,  
And with our sprightly port make the ghosts gaze" (IV, 14, 51-2).

Shakespeare's heroines are not less reticent about admitting their love in soliloquy. Julia, fingering the scraps of the letter from Proteus, discloses her passion for him (I, 2, 104-129). The same warmth of young affection is depicted in Juliet's anxiety over the delay of the Nurse (II, 5, 1-17), while her "Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds" (III, 2, 1-31) bespeaks in poetic symbols a flaming ardor for her mate. "Here we find," observes Delius, "suggestions which could be fittingly made only in soliloquy,—suggestions which would scarcely have been in place in conversation with the Nurse or with Romeo."<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Nicolaus Delius, *Über den Monolog in Shakespeare's Dramen*, Vol. XVI, p. 5.

Thus is evidenced another use of the soliloquy,—the frank portrayal of a woman's love for a man, a revelation which might seem immodest in dialog, but one nevertheless necessary to the exposition. Thus Beatrice (III, 1, 107-116), Olivia (I, 5, 308-317), Cressida (I, 2, 308-321) and Helena of "All's Well" (I, 1, 93-109) reveal their love.

#### JEALOUSY

Love is tinged with jealousy in the soliloquies of Julia (IV, 4, 184, 210) and of Helena of "A Midsummer-Night's Dream" (I, 1, 226-251). The soliloquies which actually depict the ravages of jealousy, however, are those of husbands maddened by groundless suspicions of their wives,—a theme which Shakespeare manipulates for comic, tragic, and romantic effects. "Who says this is improvident jealousy?" cries Ford (II, 2, 301), and the laughter of the audience responds to his ragings.<sup>56</sup> The motive is handled with tragic sincerity in the broodings of Othello, one soliloquy suggesting the beginnings of his jealous fancy (III, 3, 260-277) and another, the famous "It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul" (V, 2, 1-22) marking the culmination of the passion with the sorrowful determination to murder the beloved. Here again, as Delius<sup>57</sup> points out, it is only by means of soliloquy that Othello's extenuation is, in a measure, effected. Very different is the blind fury of Antony when he believes Cleopatra in league with Caesar (IV, 12, 39-49); and the frenzy of Posthumus manifests itself with romantic abandon in railings against womankind, pierced with the cry, "Vengeance! vengeance!" (II, 5, 1-35).

#### REVENGE

In the same romantic key, love, hatred and revenge are the mixed motives of Cloten's soliloquy (III, 5, 70-80). Revenge is a favorite theme in Senecan and Elizabethan tragedy.<sup>58</sup> Hieronimo of "The Spanish Tragedy," for example, has seven soliloquies in which he usually declares vengeance with violent

<sup>56</sup> See *ante*, p. 117.

<sup>57</sup> U. s., p. 15.

<sup>58</sup> See *ante*, pp. 6, 11.

insistence, never questioning his right to kill the object of his hatred. We have observed Hamlet's ponderings on the subject. Occasionally he thirsts for vengeance with the theatrical fervor of his predecessors. There is no vacillation in the soliloquy in which he swears never to forget the ghost's injunction (I, 5, 92-112). "O, Vengeance!" he cries at another moment of intense feeling (II, 2, 610), and his last words in soliloquy are:

"O, from this time forth,  
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!" (IV, 4, 65-66).

#### HATRED

The histrionic curse of Antony over the body of Caesar (III, 1, 258-275) implies vengeance, but the prophetic tone outweighs the personal. Hatred rather than revenge is the dominant note,—by no means a new one in monologic declamation. The rhetorical extravagances of Senecan soliloquizers were preceded in England by the ragings of Herod in the pageant wagon and in the street also:

"I rent! I rave! and now run I wode!  
A that these velen trayturs hath mard this my mode!"<sup>99</sup>

Violent feeling and grandiloquent expression reach a culmination in Antony's theatrical imprecation. Equally vehement are two curses in "Timon" hurled at the character just departed (III, 1, 54-66; III, 5, 104-117). Timon's long and bitter curse on Athens and its inhabitants (IV, 1, 1-41) is a study in the malignity of hatred, and so, in a brief form, is Caliban's spiteful cursing of Prospero (II, 2, 1-3).

With no less rhetorical flourish but with greater intensity, hatred is depicted in the soliloquy of the villain. We have already examined the villain's soliloquy as a means of exposition;<sup>90</sup> as a revelation of passion it is equally suggestive. Gloucester's malignity directs itself toward anyone who chances to be in the path of his ambition: "Clarence, thy turn is next, and then the rest," he gleefully observes in "The Third Part of Henry the Sixth" (V, 7, 90). Not so much personal spleen,

<sup>99</sup> Manly, Vol. I, p. 147.

<sup>90</sup> See *ante*, p. 60.

however, as diabolical joy in the game enlivens his utterance. Animated by an ambition similar to Gloucester's, Lady Macbeth's broodings are less specific as to the object of her machinations, and her sinister mood is far removed from his fiendish levity. Fired by a single vicious passion which expresses itself in lurid apostrophes, her soliloquies (I, 5, 1-31, 39-55) are elementally akin to the incantations of Seneca's *Medea* (IV, 2).

Of all Shakespeare's soliloquizing villains, however, none is more downright in his expression of personal hatred nor more convincing in the disclosure of his passion than Iago. The brevity, simplicity and candor of his plottings add touches of realism. Thought is suggested—"How, how?—Let's see. . . . It is engendered" (I, 3, 400, 409); but back of the cogitation is the malign impulse—"I hate the Moor" (I, 3, 392). Again, a mingling of thought and passion is suggested by the assertion, "'Tis here, but yet confus'd" (II, 1, 319). Iago's soliloquies indicate a climactic development of passion. Beginning with a clear statement of his hatred and the reasons therefor, together with a confused purpose to hatch evil, presently his scheming becomes articulate, while his imagination is stirred by the weaving of "the net that shall enmesh them all" (II, 3, 342-368). Finally, intoxicated by the artistic perfection of his poisonous designs, he reveals his exultation in burning imagery which culminates, with the approach of the object of his hatred, in that direful prophecy,

"Not poppy, nor mandragora,  
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world  
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep  
Which thou ow'dst yesterday" (III, 3, 330-333).

### FEAR

Equally picturesque and vivid is the portrayal of fear in the Shakespearean soliloquy. Richard the Third, awakening from his dream and for the first time awake to his conscience, thus epitomizes his terrified mood:

"The lights burn blue. It is now dead midnight.  
Cold fearful drops stand on my trembling flesh" (V, 3, 180-1).

Likewise Juliet's phial soliloquy opens with the revelation:

"I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins,  
That almost freezes up the heat of life" (IV, 3, 15-16).

Both soliloquies are surcharged with terror, every image conjured up adding fresh horror to the mental state. A milder aspect of fear is depicted in the premonitions of Portia ("Julius Caesar," II, 4, 39-46) and of Antony ("Antony and Cleopatra," II, 3, 33-40). Fear, in its sinister fascination, is symbolized in the fatal vision of the dagger which confronts Macbeth (II, 1, 33, 49). The apparition is doubtless intended as an hallucination "proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain," but Macbeth's dread is a real emotion. The knocking at the gate and the sight of blood converts his dread into fright (II, 2, 57-63). To be sure, the fright is not unmixed with other feelings. The question,

"Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood  
Clean from my hand?"

has a large significance quite apart from the momentary impulse of fear.

Thus even our brief study of the Shakespearean soliloquy's depiction of the passions,—grief, love, jealousy, revenge, hatred and fear, together with their various combinations and modifications,—brings home the truth of Professor Curry's tribute: "Shakespeare's soliloquies . . . are objective embodiments in words of feelings and moods of which the speaker himself is only partly conscious. This is the very climax of literature,—to word what no individual ever words."<sup>61</sup>

#### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SHAKESPEAREAN SOLILOQUY

The Shakespearean soliloquy is its own justification. True, as a means of exposition and as an accompaniment of the action, the soliloquy is now virtually obsolete. Yet we would not dispense with it in these capacities, as manipulated by the master. The depiction of villainy in the soliloquies of Richard the Third, Iago, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth may not be in strict accordance with recent studies in criminology, nor with

<sup>61</sup> S. S. Curry, *Browning and the Dramatic Monolog*, Boston, 1908, p. 56.



the present methods of play-making, but each monolog is a superb artistic achievement which stands the test of time. Again, according to the theatrical fashion of to-day, a character alone is almost never permitted to fall asleep, commit suicide or die; but these acts are often momentarily dramatic, and Shakespeare, by means of accompanying soliloquies, has raised them to the realm of high poetic seriousness. Further, our drop-curtain removes the requirement for entrance and exit speeches, but the little soliloquies introducing, linking and closing the episodes of Shakespearean tragedy give a lyric finish to the scenes impossible in modern plays. The overheard soliloquy, to be sure, is out of the question nowadays, but the very absurdity of the convention serves to add merriment to Shakespeare's delightful fooling.

Not all of Shakespeare's comic monologs are indispensable, but the few by the vulgar buffoon are far outbalanced by the many which portray the laughable aspects of human nature. The ego of the soliloquizer is laid bare for the delectation of the audience, and hence those inimitable studies in self-opinionated assurance, the soliloquies of Benedick and Falstaff.

In tragedy as in comedy some of the most notable Shakespearean characters are depicted by means of the soliloquy. The pure passion of youth, exuberantly phrased in the abundant imagery of nature, is disclosed in the solitary musings of the immortal lovers, Romeo and Juliet. Through the medium of soliloquy we are made to feel with Macbeth his temptation, his ambition, his fearsome resolve, and finally his miserable recognition of Nemesis. Brutus might appear a murderer and Hamlet a madman, were it not for the soliloquies which reveal their noble natures wrenched by their conceptions of duty. Hamlet without soliloquy would be Hamlet left out. His habit of thinking too precisely on the event constitutes the real tragedy. Likewise the contrition of the criminal Claudius and the humility of the despotic Lear—parables unsurpassed in the history of the drama—are made intelligible by aid of soliloquy. These instances serve to illustrate the indebtedness of dramatic literature to the Shakespearean soliloquy, and, indeed, of Shakespeare to the convention of the soliloquy which was ready at his hand.

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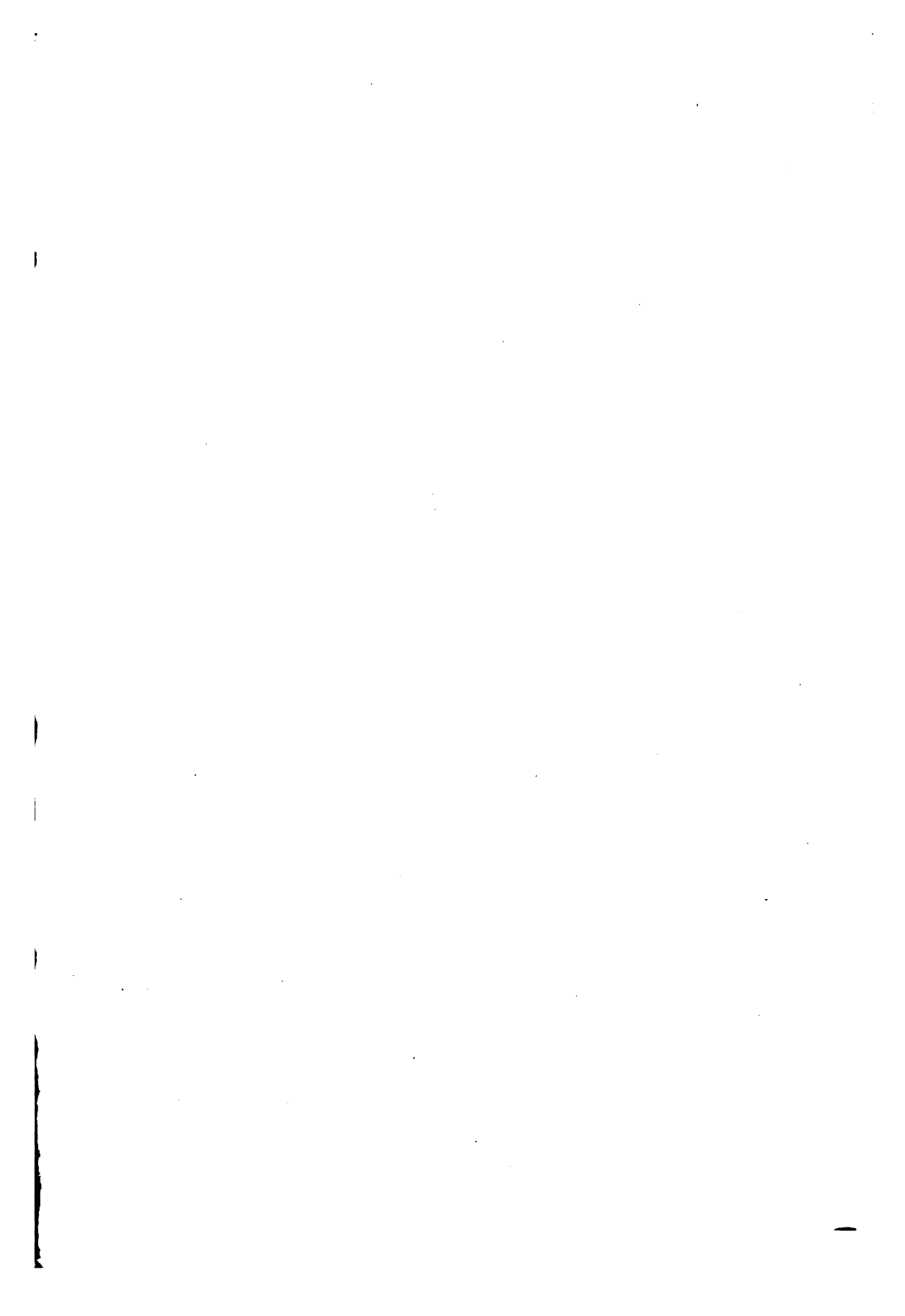
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